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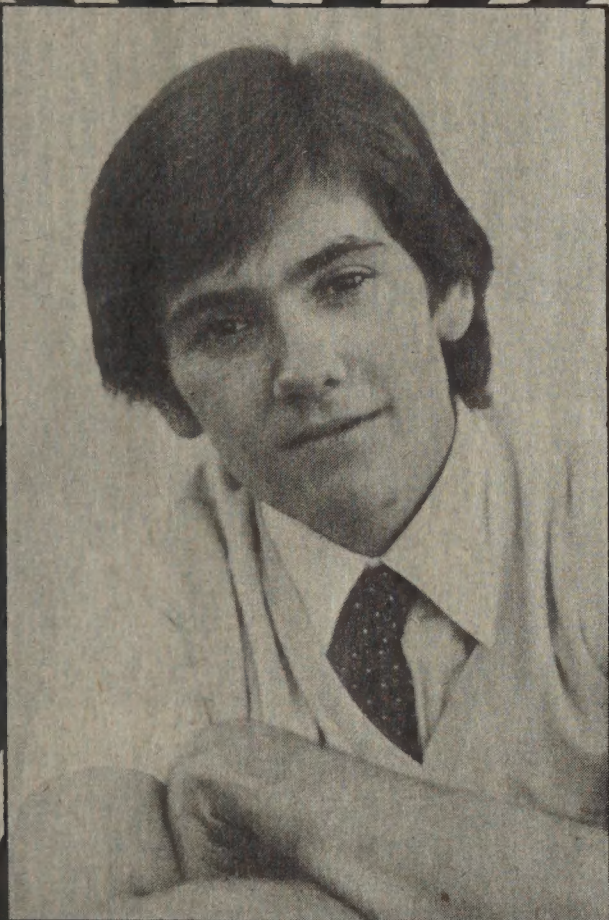
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Gay Community News

THE WEEKLY FOR LESBIANS AND GAY MALES

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Aaron Fricke Tells His Story

Court Lets Onofre Ruling Stand
Lesbians Leave International Group
Men Organize to Counter Rape

GayCommunityNews

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GPA officers: (left to Right) Mark Segal, Phil Nash, Joe DeSabato, Morgan Pinney.

NGTF, Press Make Up

By Michael Moncher

In an April 7 press release titled "Request to Editors," with the caveat "Not for Publication," the National Gay Task Force (NGTF) requested the gay press "to exercise caution in printing . . . stories concerning NGTF written by Larry Bush," Washington correspondent for the San Francisco *Sentinel*.

In response to this action, Mark Segal, Publisher and Managing Editor of *The Philadelphia Gay News* issued a press release stating "that this 'Request' smacks of censorship, and represents an attack on the entire gay press."

Segal proposed that a resolution be adopted at the second Gay Press Association (GPA) meeting held in Dallas on May 1 through 3 which would condemn "any effort to silence . . . Mr. Bush's reporting," and further stating that the NGTF release was "a direct attack on good journalism." The resolution pledged "to stand by Mr. Bush and his work . . ."

Several GPA members say that the GPA feeling that the tone of the resolution was too severe, passed an alternative which empowered the organization through its newly elected president, Joe DiSabato, to meet with the NGTF in order to convey its concerns that the gay press be free and healthy, not subject to control or direction by any person or organization.

DiSabato told *GCN* that, in meeting with NGTF co-executive director Lucia Valeska, he was directed to "communicate to the co-Executive Directors of the NGTF," [Valeska and Charles Brydon] "our concerns about the

recent 'Request'."

DeSabato further stated that the GPA "was strongly interested in protecting and defending the rights and integrity of the gay press and media."

As a result of his meeting with Valeska, the NGTF, through its co-Executive Directors, wrote a letter to DiSabato personally which, among numerous points, sought to clarify its motives in issuing the April 7 release. The letter stated "First, we wanted to respond to material which affects important interests of NGTF . . . It had nothing to do with censorship."

Immediately following the April 7 release, the Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club of San Francisco introduced a resolution calling for the immediate resignation of Valeska and Brydon. Charles Lee Morris, sponsor of the resolution and publisher of the *Sentinel* said at that time, "I have never before been publically critical of a national gay organization," but that now "action is required all across the country."

Similar opinions were offered by other gay journalists including Pat Burke of the San Diego *Update* and Randy Shilts, a San Francisco based journalist.

Segal told *GCN* that "the Gay Press has to take a stand somewhere when we are being used. If we don't exhibit strong ethical background and journalistic principles, we'll never be respected as a press. Although perhaps my resolution was too strong, it was meant to make a stand for the in-

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Court Denies Zeh's Motion

CINCINNATI, OH — A county judge has refused to dismiss felony indictments against the producer of a lesbian and gay radio program who was charged, along with the station carrying his program, with "disseminating matter harmful to juveniles."

Hamilton County Judge Peter Outcalt ruled on May 15 that the state of Ohio has jurisdiction in the case of public radio station WAIF-FM and John Zeh, producer of "Gaydreams," after attorneys for the defendants had argued that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) should have jurisdiction. Defense attorneys Allen Brown and James Feldman, Jr. had held that the case was a federal matter since the station broadcasts to three states as well as to several counties in Ohio.

Indictments against Zeh and WAIF were handed down on February 17 after complaints from members of the Platt family of Cincinnati that four of the Platt children had heard and tape-recorded a segment of Zeh's program in which he reads parts

of "A Guide to Greasy Fingers," described by Zeh as "a consumer's comparison of different lubricants used in bed" (see *GCN*, Vol. 8, No. 31).

Assistant prosecutor Leonard Kirschner admitted in court that the question of whether state law is pre-empted by FCC regulations has not been decided in the courts.

Kirschner claimed during the hearing that the prosecutor's office was "not trying to censor Zeh or WAIF."

Feldman has described Kirschner's superior, chief prosecutor Simon Leis, Fr., as "well-known for his anti-gay feelings."

Brown, the American Civil Liberties Union lawyer representing WAIF, warned that local prosecution for controversial content could be directed as well against large commercial stations. Any program dealing with sexuality, like "The Phil Donahue Show," "Charlie's Angels" or even "The Miss America Pageant," Feldman argued, "would have to go off the air in Ohio" if state laws applied.

Brown accused the prosecutor

Onofre Decision Stands

By Phil Shehadi

WASHINGTON, DC — The United States Supreme Court has declined to review a 1980 New York Court of Appeals ruling that declared the state sodomy laws were unconstitutional.

The decision by the nation's highest court is not an endorsement of the state ruling that legalized sodomy in New York, but gay rights activists involved in the case are nevertheless pleased. "It's what we were hoping for," said Roz Richter, executive director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. She explained that given the conservative flavor of the current Supreme Court, a decision to review the case would have been "too risky."

"The Court might have reversed that state ruling with disastrous consequences for future challenges to state sodomy laws," she added.

Had the Supreme Court heard the case and affirmed it, however, sodomy laws in every state could have been declared unconstitutional.

The case involved the April, 1978 conviction of Ronald Onofre, a gay minister from Onondaga County, New York on

charges of consensual sodomy. His conviction was successfully appealed to an Appellate division court by Syracuse lawyer Bonnie Strunk. Finally, in December, 1980, that appeal was upheld by the Court of Appeals, New York State's highest court.

The Onondaga county district attorney's office then applied for a Supreme Court hearing. It argued that the Court of Appeals decision was inconsistent with other state rulings on sodomy laws and over-extended the constitutional right to privacy. A 1976 state court ruling in North Carolina, for example, affirmed the constitutionality of that state's sodomy laws.

"We'll never know if the Supreme Court decided not to hear the case because it agreed with my reasoning or simply because it didn't want to deal with the issue," Strunk told *GCN*. The court is not obliged to articulate its reasons for rejecting an application for review.

Strunk noted that the Supreme Court has not recently heard any case involving a gay-rights issue, apparently preferring to leave these issues up to the state courts.

Strunk expressed hope that the Supreme Court's refusal to touch

New York's sodomy ruling may encourage similar rulings in other states.

"It's getting easier and easier for other states to jump on the band wagon," she said. The highest courts in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania have all recently declared their state sodomy laws to be unconstitutional. In New York and New Jersey the decisions were made on privacy grounds, and in Pennsylvania on equal-protection grounds.

A case challenging the sodomy law in Texas is currently pending in a federal court.

The January 24, 1980 decision in *People v. Onofre* that overturned Onofre's decision — and ultimately New York State's sodomy laws — read in part, "Personal sexual conduct is a fundamental right, protected by the right to privacy because of the transcendental importance of sex to the human condition, the intimacy of the conduct, and its relationship to a person's right to control his or her body. The right is broad enough to include sexual acts between non-married persons." —filed from New York, NY

Lesbian Group Leaves IGA

By Nancy Wechsler

TURIN, ITALY — The International Lesbian Information Secretariat (ILIS), the women's branch of the International Gay Association (IGA), met last month just prior to the IGA conference of April 17 through 20 and decided to form their own separate organization and disaffiliate from the IGA. Many women, however, have decided to remain in IGA, and a new women's branch has been formed.

According to conference attendees Nilda Aponte of the National Coalition of Black Gays and Clint Hockenberry of the D.C. Chapter of Gay Activist Alliance, ILIS's decision to leave the IGA came at the end of the ILIS meeting, without much advance notice, and when many women had already left to attend the IGA conference.

Aponte and Hockenberry both told *GCN* that they felt a major

reason for the split was what they termed "national politics," in particular the situation in Italy between lesbians and gay men. Because of what they perceive as the sexism of the Italian men, most lesbian activists there have chosen not to join FUORI, the major gay organization, but to work in independent lesbian groups.

Since one hundred of the one hundred and fifty women at the ILIS conference were Italians and since every person had one vote as opposed to delegated votes for organizations as in the IGA conference the Italian women's views on splitting from the men dominated the conference.

Aponte and Hockenberry said that tensions over economic concerns may also have helped trigger the split. The effects of the different economic status of lesbians and gay men in the society were felt by the delegates since the IGA conference was held in a much more expensive place than the women's conference. Some women felt that the men were not as aware as they should be of the financial hardship this would place on women who wanted to come to the IGA conference and symbolized to them the men's general lack of awareness of economic issues.

Proposed Changes

The women who have stayed in IGA, while acknowledging that there are problems, feel it is possible for the organization to take concrete steps to improve the status of lesbians in the organization. Several changes in how IGA operates were proposed by the lesbians and adopted by the whole conference. In introducing their proposals, they said, "The gay liberation movement in general, and the IGA in particular, have failed to effectively confront the problems of oppression on the basis of race, sex, class, national or ethnic differences. Until these problems are confronted, lesbians will be alienated and marginalized by the gay liberation movement and at gay conferences. We, lesbians attending the 1981 IGA conference, are presently

experiencing such alienation. For this reason we would like to add the following proposals:

1) "The already existing practice of twinning groups in the IGA be continued and expanded. [By twinning a wealthier organization helps a poorer organization attend the conference]"

2) "Provisions be made to set up an IGA travel fund to facilitate the participation of delegates located in the Third World, those groups unable to assume the costs of attending the conference and individuals from areas where groups do not exist — such as areas subjected to extreme political repression . . ."

3) "Child care be a mandatory component of IGA conferences, as decided by the 1980 Barcelona conference."

4) "Workshops at future IGA conferences include a greater variety of topics and include both lesbian and gay male issues."

5) "Conferences be located within a city."

It was also agreed that, for mixed organizations, one vote would be held by a woman and the other by a man even if the organization was 80% male. In addition, it was decided that if there was an issue that surfaced that dealt only with lesbians, that only women would vote on that issue and make a decision on behalf of the IGA.

In summing up her feelings about the IGA conference and the passage of the proposals, Aponte said, "The feeling among the women was that we had done our work. We were very distressed by the ILIS split and the sexism of the conference. But by the end those feelings disappeared and were replaced by a lot of good feelings."

Other Major Developments

In addition to dealing with the issues raised by the women who remained in IGA, the conference made several other decisions that moved their work and organization forward. They adopted their first constitution. They agreed to hold their next conference in June, 1982 in either Washington,

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News Notes

demonstration against ins planned

BOSTON — Demonstrations have been planned in cities all over the world against the US Immigration and Naturalization Service to protest the exclusion from this country of a gay Britisher who was attempting to visit.

Phillip Fotheringham was denied entry into this country when he arrived at JFK airport in New York on May 5 because he is gay.

The Boston demonstrations will be held at noon on Friday, May 29 in front of the Immigration and Naturalization Service office in the JFK building in City Hall Plaza.

For more information, call (617) 661-7223.

“everybody we knew did it”

ATLANTA, GA — A man who neighbors say has helped several generations of poor youths by paying them for sexual favors has been sentenced to 30 years in prison for “child molestation.”

Gazette reports that 49-year-old Nathaniel Hardy, a long-time resident of an economically disadvantaged section of the city, was sentenced on May 4 after claims by prosecutors and local media that he had been involved in an extensive “child sex ring” for at least 17 years. Police claim to have found nude photographs of 114 youths in Hardy’s home.

At Hardy’s trial, a district attorney described the accused as “a man who preyed upon kids” for “kicks.”

But *Gazette* says friends of Hardy and peers of the six youths who testified against him described the defendant as a well-known figure in the poorer sections of Atlanta and as “one of them.”

Gazette quotes a 31-year-old resident of the area as saying that visits to Hardy by youths have become a tradition. “I’ve lived here ‘most of my life and I did it, my brother did it and my dad did it. Everybody we knew did it,” the man is quoted as saying. “The men who pay young guys whatever amount for a little play are usually well-known by not only the boys involved but by their families — who are generally grateful for the extra financial help and the opportunity to get their kids out of their hair for a time.”

gay men attacked in subway station

BOSTON — Two gay Harvard students report that a group of 12 youths yelled homophobic insults at them while they were waiting for a train on the Red Line platform at Park Street station, then crossed the tracks and assaulted them.

The incident occurred at about 11:30 pm on Friday, May 15.

After blowing a police whistle, one of the men fled and called a Boston police who said that they could not act in the case because the station is in the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) police. The incident was reported to the MBTA police but the youths had fled by that time.

The two men say none of the several witnesses to the incident offered assistance.

One of the men was cut on the lip in the assault and his glasses were broken.

group warns of clean-up drive

LOS ANGELES — The Homosexual Information Center (HIC) has criticized an effort by City Council member Peggy Stevenson to rid Hollywood of prostitutes as well as the introduction in the California Legislature of a bill to increase penalties for “sex offenders” and “child molesters.”

The bill, approved in April by the California Senate Judiciary Committee, would impose mandatory prison sentences for “sex offenses” between similarly-aged adolescents.

Stevenson has proposed city ordinances to restrict “sex related businesses” and to increase penalties for prostitutes.

According to a statement issued May 13, “HIC opposes all law enforcement directed against massage parlors, dirty book stores, street hustlers or other sex oriented businesses on the grounds that voluntary behavior of any sort that does no harm to the person or property of others should not be regulated by city, state, or federal governments in a free society.”

HIC says present sex laws are enforced selectively against homosexuals. The organization states, “Despite disclaimers by Det. Lloyd Martin, LAPD’s homophobe assigned to juvenile detail, HIC has proof that cases of heterosexual child molestation have been ignored even in cases where a complaint was made by the victim or the victim’s family, while enforcement is concentrated on homosexual suspects.”

norway scores a first

OSLO, Norway — Norway became the first country in the world to pass national legislation prohibiting discrimination against lesbians and gay men on May 8 when King Olav V signed his name to two new laws.

The Stamp, newsletter of the Gay Movement of Bergen, says the first of the two laws prohibits public statements that threaten or scorn a person or a group of persons or expose anyone to hatred, persecution or contempt because of their sexual orientation.

The second law makes it illegal for businesses to refuse service or goods to persons because of their homosexuality.

According to *The Stamp*, a gay organization first proposed the legislation in 1974, two years after homosexual acts had been decriminalized in Norway. Their proposal was referred to the Penal Code Committee, which spent nearly five years discussing the matter.

The proposed laws were widely debated when the Committee issued its report in 1979. The bills were supported by the Labor Party, by some members of the Conservative Party, by the Center Party and by the Socialist Leftists. Opposition came from the Christian People’s Party and other members of the Conservative Party.

The Lower House of the Norwegian Parliament passed the measures by a vote of 61 to 22 and the Upper House by 23 to four.

May 8, the day the bills were signed into law, is already celebrated as Norwegian Liberation Day to commemorate the end of the country’s occupation by Germany during World War II.

holocaust story to be broadcast

Public radio stations throughout the country will broadcast a first-hand account of life for gay people in the Nazi concentration camps.

Scheduled to be distributed by National Public Radio during the last week of June, the program is an adaptation of *The Men with the Pink Triangles* by Heinz Heger, which was published concurrently by Alyson Press in the United States and Gay Men’s Press in England.

Wesley Horner, the Boston resident who produced and directed the program, says, “Heinz Heger’s personal journal is an opening to a part of history that is not well known. His experience and that of the thousands of gays whose experiences were similar tells us not only about human suffering, but also about compassion and dignity. His survival is the story of the capacity in each of us for resilience, adaptation, the will to live, and, of course, terrible evil and great good.”

The Men with the Pink Triangles is scheduled to be broadcast in Boston on WGBH-FM.

court upholds boy/love conviction

RALEIGH, NC — The International Gay News Agency reports that the North Carolina Supreme Court has upheld the 1979 conviction of Willie D. Pilkington for attempting to “take indecent liberties” with an 11-year-old boy.

Pilkington, who was reportedly cross-examined at his original trial on another person’s criminal record, has maintained throughout the proceedings that he is innocent.

The only evidence against the defendant was the testimony of the alleged “victim,” who said the defendant had offered him \$10 to engage in fellatio.

When questioned in court about convictions for reckless driving and driving while intoxicated, Pilkington denied that he had ever been charged with those offenses. It was later shown that Pilkington in fact was not the person whose record he was being questioned about.

Pilkington has been sentenced to four years in prison.

pride committee plans benefit

BOSTON — The Boston Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee has organized a benefit to help pay the expense of the two weeks of events scheduled for this year’s Pride Week.

“All that Glitters is not Girls,” described as “a gala performance” featured Karl Houston, will be presented on Sunday, May 31 at 7:00 pm at the Randolph Country Club, where swimming, dancing and other forms of recreation are also available.

The Boston Lesbian and Gay Pride March and Rally will take place on Saturday, June 20.

youth charged with killing gay man

BOSTON — An arrest has been made in connection with the recent stabbing death of a gay man.

Seventeen-year-old Gregory Diatchenko of the Jamaica Plain section of Boston was arrested on Friday, May 15 and charged with killing John Wharf, who was found stabbed to death in his own car in an alley off Beacon Street, near Kenmore Square, on the evening of Saturday, May 9 (see *GCN*, Vol. 8, No. 43).

A witness reported at the time hearing shouts of “Give me the money” and seeing a young white man fleeing the scene.

Wharf had reportedly been seen in Park Square, an area of the city frequented by hustlers and their clients, shortly before he was killed.

Diatchenko is being held without bail at the Charles Street jail.

italians reject abortion ban

ROME, Italy — Italian voters defied the Catholic Church on Monday, May 18 by rejecting a motion to overturn the nation’s liberal abortion law.

The vote was two-to-one in favor of keeping the current law, which makes abortion justifiable for social and economic reasons, in cases of rape and if there is a possibility the child may be deformed. It gives women 18 and over the right to an abortion during the first 90 days of pregnancy if the woman’s health is threatened.

The heavy vote in favor of the current law was a pleasant surprise to pro-choice organizations but was condemned by the Vatican. According to the Associated Press, *Corriere della Sera*, a daily newspaper in Milan, published a front-page editorial reading, “The news of the referendum results has probably caused greater pain to the Holy Father [Pope John Paul II] than the bullets that struck him [in last week’s assassination attempt].”

The Vatican has reportedly said it will not be budged by the results of the referendum.

Repeal of the current law was supported by the Christian Democratic Party, the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement and the Vatican.

three punished for burning trousers

PHILADELPHIA — Three students who countered lesbian and gay blue jean day by burning theirs have protested their suspension from Swarthmore College.

Organized by the Swarthmore College Men’s Cooperative, Blue Jean Day was intended as an expression of support for lesbian and gay rights. Students and faculty who supported the cause were asked to wear blue jeans or overalls on April 22.

But some students wore suits and ties that day, not, one of them claims, as a gesture of opposition but to show “the extremes to which things have gravitated. We who have traditional values are in a distinct minority.”

Three of the non-supporters set fire to several pairs of blue jeans in a trash can outside the campus dining hall. Their act was criticized in an editorial in *The Phoenix*, the campus newspaper, and by Dean Thomas Blackburn, who commented, “The implicit violence of fire places the act in a category not far from cross-burning or the torching of synagogues.”

The three pants burners are appealing the one-week suspension they have been given as punishment.

help!

The group of people organizing the lesbian and gay community center in Boston need you. They are trying to create a center which will represent a broad spectrum of community members. For information on how you can help, call (617) 482-4978.

**Coming Next Week
in GCN**
The GCN Music Supplement
including

Women’s Music: Politics for Sale?
Finding Non-Sexist Men’s Music
A Lesbian Look at New Wave Music



IGA

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D.C., or Philadelphia. They are organizing some international actions around U.S. Immigration policy to insure that people won't be turned away at the border when they come to the U.S. for the conference.

Other Resolutions

Human Rights: The IGA declared 1983 the "International Year for Lesbian and Gay Human Rights" and will be coordinating demonstrations "before international Human Rights headquarters both to educate and present documentation of violations that are occurring daily around the world." Refugees: International efforts to coordinate support for gay and lesbian refugees will be undertaken by IGA. El Salvador: IGA condemned the murders of gay women and men in El Salvador and urged member organizations to protest to the Salvadorian government, to their own governments and to the U.S. government. S/M, Leather: "The Third annual conference calls for

continuing dialogue on the issues of leather and S/M within the IGA and its member organizations with a view to the recognition and acceptance of them as valid expressions of human sexuality." Labor movement: "This conference recognizes the particular oppression of gay people in the workplace and the important role of the trade union movement in fighting for gay liberation. It recognizes the complexity of the labor movement in many different parts of the world and that many gay people feel intimidated by this and do not immediately look to the trade union movement for protection, or for their part in the struggle for gay rights. The conference recognizes the valuable work which many people have done in the labor movement and the need for improved information and communication and discussion about how this work should be undertaken" — *filed from Boston*

Apuzzo Dissatisfied

By John Zeh

CINCINNATI — Lesbian political activist Ginny Apuzzo told a University of Cincinnati audience that homosexuals must analyze widespread oppression against all people and work harder to build broad coalitions so the gay movement is finally "taken seriously."

The national coordinator of Gay Vote '80 told a forum organized by the UC Women's Center and Gay/Lesbian Alliance that she feels "incredibly oppressed" by the political atmosphere under President Reagan.

Reagan's budget cuts "will kill people," she said. "We'll all bleed. Do we really believe that it's a matter of life and death for some of our brothers and sisters?" People must realize oppression is widespread and not just against us because of "who we sleep with," she said.

Ten years in the gay community has convinced her that the gay movement lacks direction and purpose.

"There are only two groups in America who really believe that lesbians and gays will forge significant change — the New Christian Right and homosexuals themselves. I think they're both wrong. It doesn't matter for the New Right because it's working for them. The fact that some of us are wrong *does* matter. It could be fatal," she said.

Apuzzo said she wants "to develop an equation that will result in the movement being taken seriously." It includes formation of underlying principles and accountability instead

of what she called "actions of frenetic energy." If gays don't link up with other oppressed peoples, "we deserve to be a nostalgic footnote to history: cute, quaint, fashionable — and failed. I don't think that's what many of us risk the hardship, difficulties, and anxiety" of being involved in the gay struggle, she added.

"I don't want to be a gay rights activist when I'm 50. I want us to get on to other things. There are folks waiting for us to get working on their problems, too," Apuzzo told some 40 men and women.

She chronicled the dangers of the Family Protection Act now before Congress as "reflecting the kind of society our opponents want." "These folks are not kidding," she warned. "The imperative has never been stronger for us to sit down, put our heads together, and agree to agree, at least until we get the wolves from the door."

Conservative Christians "are looking to encourage discrimination against homosexuals. That's not mild opposition. This is heavy duty," she said. "Maybe San Francisco gays will wake up" now that fundamentalists have targetted their city.

"We have to look inside our movement now more than ever and access, evaluate and come to grips with the notion called accountability. It's not a dirty word. Unless activists become accountable to some principle, direction, and purpose," we will in a sense become a well-oiled machine that grinds out a lot of energy, but will not significantly

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Poets Rejoin First Night

By Michael Moncher

BOSTON — Jane Barnes, local lesbian poet and fiction writer, has been selected as a member of the panel responsible for coordinating the poetry section of the annual First Night celebration held on New Year's Eve.

Serving on the same panel are Elizabeth McKim and Everett Goodwin, both noted area poets.

Last year, for the first time in three years, the separate gay male and lesbian poetry reading was eliminated in favor of a single combined reading. In response to that action, a number of poets who had read in past years organized an alternative reading in protest, which took place concurrently with the First Night celebration.

As of *GCN* press time, several of those primarily responsible for the alternative reading of last year feel that such an action will be unnecessary this year. According to Barnes, the panel this year intends to reinforce its recognition of the significance of gay and lesbian poetry not only to those who write and perform, but also as a unifying influence for the gay and lesbian community as a whole.

Rudy Kikel, one of the coordinators of last year's alternative reading and a well known gay poet, told *GCN*, "I think we are persuaded about the good intentions of the First Night panel. I feel we have the ear of First Night, which was what our protest last year was all about. The panel seems responsive to our needs and now it's up to the community. First Night has made it clear that what they want is a shower of proposals. It's my hope that the community will give them just that."

Zeren Earls, president of the First Night board, came under criticism last year as a result of the modified format. In a meeting attended by Kikel, Earls made clear her desire to foster more sensitive and responsive relations with the gay and lesbian community.

Earls could not be reached for comment, but according to Kikel, Earls stated an intention to "make the same outreach to gays and lesbians this year that was made to the Chinese last year." He believes her commitment is genuine.

Eric Rofes, local gay activist, has had much personal experience with Earls. He told *GCN*, "I don't feel that the past criticism against Zeren has been justified. She seems most sensitive to gay issues and is doing a good job."

Peter Payack, poet and supporter of the sepearat reading, said, "Jane Barnes' forceful presence on the panel ought to get good results. As long as one person is there to speak out, I think we'll get at least some of what we want."

The issue not yet settled among

the panel members is the mechanism best suited to bring forth the best work available in the lesbian and gay community, with emphasis on new authors — a mechanism which will also give appropriate time to other minority and third-world viewpoints.

Barnes, McKim and Goodwin have all emphasized to *GCN* that public response, through the submission of proposals, is necessary if the panel is to be guided to an appropriate format. In this regard, proposals indicating interest by and for specific poets are critical.

Proposals need not be formal, the panelists told *GCN*, but should address a format most likely to offer a fair hearing for all, as well as imaginative uses of other media to augment the spoken word. All proposals must be submitted by June 15.

Barnes said she will be pleased to assist anyone wishing to submit proposals or discuss ideas. She can be reached c/o First Night, 182 Tremont St., 10th Floor, Boston, MA 02111.

Maine Bill Fails

By David Nijinsky

AUGUSTA, ME — Amidst a debate which one legislator characterized as the lowest in his fourteen years in the Maine House of Representatives, Maine's lesbian and gay rights bill recently went down to defeat once again by a sizeable margin.

The bill would have added the words "sexual or affectional preference" to Maine's existing

Human Rights Act guarding oppressed groups against discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations and credit.

Following a very close 8-5 negative report on the bill from a joint House-Senate committee, the bill was rejected by the Maine Senate on May 8 by a 16-13 margin, and by the House on May 11 by a vote of 99 to 39.

Local lesbian and gay activists took encouragement from the fact that the bill garnered slightly more support this year than it had when first introduced in the last legislative session two years ago. However, they expressed concern over the nature of the House debate on the bill.

According to Portland activist Kate McQueen, who also co-chairs the board of Gay Rights National Lobby (GRNL), during the House debate there were "comments by a number of right-wing legislators about how we were animalistic and immoral and sinful, and that what we need is a normal, healthy society. One legislator referred to how we wanted to do it with goats. It was really sick."

The debate received front-page coverage in local papers, and McQueen gave voice to local concerns over such a public display of oppressive behavior by the state's legislative leadership: "That gives crazies a lot of leeway to act out their craziness," said.

However, McQueen also credited the debate with increasing the educational impact of the campaign to secure the bill's passage. This campaign, spearheaded by the local chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Maine Women's Lobby, included letters from NOW to every legislator about the bill, and general encouragement of gay men and lesbians to come out to their legislators.

Furthermore, McQueen noted, "more and more people were outraged by the debate in the House, so that slowly but surely [as letters to the editor commenting on the debate showed], more and more straight people are being moved to be outraged and to be public about that outrage."

Organized opposition to the bill came from the Maine Christian Civic League and various other fundamentalist Christian churches.

— *filed from Boston*

Gay on Death Row Appeals Conviction

By John Kyper

STARKE, FL — Gay Death-row inmate Robert Austin Sullivan continues to struggle for a new trial — and for his life.

Sullivan was convicted in 1973 for a suburban Miami murder he claims he did not commit. Two years ago, during Gay Pride Week, he came within two days of the electric chair after Gov. Robert Graham signed his death warrant (see *GCN* Vol. 7, No. 3). Sullivan's account of his Death Watch ordeal, which lasted six days before his lawyer could get a judge to issue a stay of execution because his appeal was still in process, was published in the March 6, 1980, *Rolling Stone* under the title "Waiting to Die."

Sullivan's appeal is based on a claim of insufficient counsel, alleging that his attorney, a public defender, failed to locate several potential witnesses who could have testified that he was in a gay bar 40 miles away at the time of the murder. At several of the hearings on his motion for a new trial, this lawyer has appeared as the state's star witness against him.

On March 19, 1981 U.S. Magistrate Patricia Jean Klye recommended against the motion. Although the action was a sore disappointment, both Sullivan and his attorney Ray Black are hoping that Federal Judge Jose Gonzalez of the Southern district of Florida will rule in his favor.

Gonzalez is not bound by Kyle's recommendation. He was the judge who granted Sullivan a stay of execution in 1979 after the Florida Supreme Court had turned him down.

An unfavorable decision would exhaust Sullivan's appeals at the District level, and he would then have to submit his motion for a new trial to the U.S. Circuit Court

of Appeals. Filing appeals is a financially and emotionally draining process that could take many more years before it reaches its final resolution.

The late *GCN* reporter David Brill, who was investigating Sullivan's case, believed in his innocence. Not long before his death in November, 1979, Brill's car was broken into and all his files were taken. When his briefcase was recovered, the only file that was missing was Sullivan's.

Brill was also investigating the death of Gilbert Jackson, who Sullivan and others believe was the actual murderer. Five days after he had been contacted by Sullivan's defense and had agreed to talk, Jackson was found "mysteriously murdered" in his Winthrop, Massachusetts home on August 28, 1978.

As a result of the national publicity surrounding the signing of Robert Sullivan's death warrant, one alibi witness has come forward to place him at the bar during the murder. That night was the witness' twenty-first birthday party. The defense desperately needs to contact Thomas Murphy, an attorney who was drinking with Sullivan the night he was arrested. Murphy was a graduate of Suffolk Law School who was living in the Miami area in 1973. Two other witnesses need to be contacted: Robert Porter from New England and Michael Carmack from Florida. Anyone with information should call Virginia Snyder at (305) 734-3111.

Sullivan's defense fund has been exhausted, and he needs support to continue his fight. Donations can be sent to: Robert Austin Sullivan Legal Defense Fund, c/o Ralph Jacobs, 53 Leicester Road, Belmont, MA 02178.

Community Voices

access to information

To all lesbians,

After some thought and discussion with friends on the issue of S/M and the lesbian community, I have some thoughts to share.

While issues of power in relationships is ever-present and worthy of much effort, the resolution of this power through infliction of pain seems extreme, despite its consensual nature among lesbians. Somehow I can see bondage as being useful for expressions of power and passivity, while the willful hurting of a lover seems unnecessary and cruel.

I also disagree with Janet Schrim ("S/M for Feminists," *GCN*, May 9, 1981) and her anti-porn viewpoint. To quote, "How can pornography or deviant sexuality be the perpetrator of violence when they exist so clearly on the edge of society?" Pornography is widely viewed and accepted in all strata of this sex-oriented, misogynist society. Pornography uses the bodies of women to perpetrate straight male fantasies around sex and in so doing encourages sexual violence against women.

When I hear stories from the west coast of lesbian S/M parties where women dress in master/slave and Nazi/Jew costumes I get very scared and wonder how far the fulfillment of fantasy and roles will go for some women. By engaging in this sort of activity, are we not internalizing and accepting this kind of behavior in the society at large?

I do agree with Schrim on the issue of accessibility to the women's press. I may not agree with S/M as a personal choice, but I want to know that I have had access to hearing what that experience means to some lesbians and be able to form my opinions after a well-informed exposure. Maybe S/M should not be an issue in the women's community as Schrim points out as stated by anti-S/M women, but it is an issue and cannot be ignored until it goes away. Especially now in the years when we need to be able to accept and discuss openly our differences, to strengthen ourselves in preparation for what could become a lesbian and gay holocaust in the future. It is true that these issues could seriously divide our movement which would be playing "right" into the hands of the right wing extremists.

This issue has become important for me especially since it has divided two women I know who have been working together for several years and who I have the highest respect for. It both saddens and frightens me that we are starting not to listen to each other.

Susan Eleanor
Somerville, MA

pro-paradox

To the Editor,

I enjoy reading articles in this paper (like Janet Schrim's "S/M for Feminists") that respect ambiguity and paradox. Please publish more.

Your,
Rick Hillegas
San Francisco, CA

Design Director

Gay Community News is looking for a Design Director. Graphic Arts skills necessary as well as a commitment to feminism and social change. Low salary plus medical benefits. June 15 opening. Address inquiries and resumes to Amy Hoffman, **GCN**, 22 Bromfield Street, Boston, MA 02108 or call (617) 426-4469.

the issues that divide us

Dear *GCN*,

Having read *GCN* regularly for the past few months, similarities between some of the issues that divide us are gradually becoming more recognizable to me.

As feminists, we have been through a great deal of conditioning and reconditioning, to come to this: that we will work to eradicate the existing discrimination and oppression of women inherent in patriarchy. Our experiences and those of our sisters have made us so extremely aware of exploitation that we are able to recognize and fight it successfully, even daily, in our own lives. Our refusal to be blind to exploitation, however, sometimes works to our detriment, when we speak of the minorities within the gay movement, for example.

There has been much division among lesbians and gay men surrounding the issue of man-boy love. For feminists who are used to uncovering sexism and exploitation, the ages of the people involved recall a familiar heterosexual scene: incest. For those of us who have suffered this experience as well as those who condemn our oppressors for perpetuating it, we bring to the man-boy love issue our hostilities regarding the exploitation of small children. . . . Man-boy love is not like incest. There is no "one-year-old choking on a penis. . . (no) leg of a five-year-old is broken as she protest the rape" (excerpted from Susan Lees "Shadows in Our lives," *Equal Times*, May 31, 1981). There is no violence. There is, instead, consent.

Protecting children from their sexuality is a new phenomenon in our world, and we assume, with this protection, that children cannot choose, have no opinions, are only swayed and influenced by others. If we continue to bestow upon them this "gift" of protection, then this inability to choose will certainly become commonplace. How different is this protection from that offered to women throughout patriarchal history?

Man-boy love is not an imitation of patriarchal violence, nor a mimicry of molestation of children by heterosexuals males. It is a consenting love between people in the minority, as is lesbianism.

Both issues have historically caused splits within movements: man-boy love divides lesbians and gay men, as lesbianism once divided the women's movement. We have seen both issues tucked behind closed doors for "protection." Of ourselves? To appear less threatening to outsiders? If we don't accept each other, who will accept us?

Another issue of sexuality that separates us has also been discussed recently in the pages of *GCN*: Lesbian S/M. As feminists, we are again searching for the ways in which this choice imitates patriarchal oppression, and the scenario is similar again: dominant heterosexual male vs. submissive heterosexual female. It is, however, far from the same. We insult women who have discovered S/M to be pleasureable by assuming, again, that they have no opinions, have not made a conscious choice, and cannot be feminists. We insult them by calling S/M violent: once again, there is consent.

We insult S/M by not listening; by ignoring or misrepresenting S/M as lesbians were ignored and misrepresented in the women's movement, clearly because of the "climate of the times." When will we stop apologizing for ourselves?

In our desperate attempt to refuse to incorporate patriarchal values, we have managed to absorb some: the patriarchal art of protection, and the ability to obscure and oppress that which we refuse to acknowledge as valid, equal, valuable.

Let us examine our struggle with more empathy and openness — if we listen rather than condemn, we can only move forward.

In struggle,
Lori G. Moses
Boston, MA

shrieking

Dear *GCN* Folks:

Thanks for Gay Comedy News of May 16½. We're still giggling compulsively over "Gay, Dead, and Proud." (The punch line about NGTF is Too, Too True.) And the *GCN* back-page ad nicely parodied The Advocate's recent ad in The NY Times. You've probably stepped on some corns and there may be shrieks of outrage, so we thought we'd give a SHA-REE-EEE-EEK! of delight.

Dee Prithm & Felice Finkter,
Vibrator-Lovers Liberation Front

gcn censorship?

Dear Friends,

I am concerned about what may be a pattern of censorship in *GCN* in recent weeks, as well as trends in editing which I believe are harmful to all parts of the gay community.

Three weeks ago, I wrote a brief article announcing the coming trial of Richard Peluso which had been prepared as a case sponsored by the NAMBLA emergency defense fund. I made it clear that the article I had written need not be published in full. I suggested it could be published as a News Note, News Analysis, news report or in any other form. *GCN* is our ONLY means of communicating key events in advance.

The Peluso trial was such a key event for all man/boy lovers, and especially for NAMBLA as an active gay organization. *GCN* did not print one word about the trial in advance. I then asked the news editor if someone could cover the trial for *GCN* and write a straight (sic) news story, but I was told that no one could. It was suggested that a NAMBLA member write a story or supply notes from the trial. Phil Knighton wrote a brief but thorough story about the trial. Aside from serious errors which were NOT Phil's but must have crept in during editing and typing, all reference to NAMBLA, Peluso's own courageous testimony, and even references to the lawyers defending Peluso were taken out of the story.

A major and newsworthy feature of this trial was that it was organized entirely by NAMBLA, and that gay activists testified at the trial. In the past, trials and hearing concerning gay organizations and sponsored by GLAD and other gay groups have received much publicity in *GCN*. The gay sponsorship of the defense has been featured. It is particularly a disservice to the firm of Anne Gilmore & Richard Iadoli, and attorneys Iadoli and Kim Dwyer, that their incredibly fine defense was not credited. The attorneys and the gay therapist who testified donated their services entirely — an almost unheard of event.

The defense of Mr. Peluso aimed directly at key sexual and political issues. It took up literally weeks of time of gay and straight lawyers, psychiatrists, psychologists and NAMBLA members. The blackout on NAMBLA sponsorship and the attorneys involved would provoke anger even if the straight press were responsible. For this to happen in *GCN* is inexcusable.

Finally, in the same issue, Michael Thompson's excellent article on nude beaches had been accompanied by a photograph of a nude sixteen-year-old boy with a bird sitting on a California nude beach. *GCN* staff vetoed the use of that

recreating our bar

Dear *GCN*,

After the recent Holly Near concert, a group of friends and myself were, once again, wishing we could go to the Saints. To dance, talk and just hang out in "our" bar would have felt wonderful. This was not the first time, and certainly won't be the last, we found ourselves missing the Saints. I always think of the Saints as the lesbian version of a "neighborhood bar" — a place that was ours; that was a welcoming and comfortable retreat from the world; and also was part of a world many of us are trying to create. I took the bar for granted, as I'm sure many others did, and only since its closing, have I begun to understand its importance as well as the level of struggle necessary to create and maintain a lesbian bar. The Saints was not "just a bar" — it was part of a growing community and was consistently responsive to the needs of that community.

It has been nearly nine months since the Saints was shut down and The Collective fired. During this time, the women of the Collective have continued to meet regularly and organize what have become monthly fundraising events. Money earned from these events is to be used in an effort to create a women-controlled, women-owned space — the kind of space that does not now exist in this city. The Collective members have given this project an enormous amount of thought and energy. These women are principled, dedicated, hard-working, and committed to creating such a place.

You can help by coming to the next women's dance on Saturday, May 30th at the Group School, 345 Franklin St., Central Square, Cambridge. To all of you who miss the Saints, to those of you who have heard of the Saints, and to those of you who can imagine how wonderful it was (and will be again!) — PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT THIS EFFORT! If you can't come and would like to make a donation, money can be sent to The Collective, P.O. Box 39, Somerville, MA 02144.

photo, which was intrinsic to Michael's article. the resulting white space and enlarged headline reminded me of similar censorship I have seen in newspapers operating under dictatorships. Thompson pointed out that he did not photograph women nude on beaches because he was sensitive to the issue of objectification of women by men in photography, and because he felt women might be harassed by his photographing them. Thompson has provided photos over the years for *GCN* which have included men and women of all ages. Taken together these three incidents are appalling. I suggest that "professionalism," "balanced journalism," et al, do not belong in a gay community newspaper. Our editing should allow various voices to get through in word and in graphics. The more voices and faces and bodies the better.

I continue to enjoy articles and graphics by people from all parts of our community (including the recent cover on lesbian S/M and articles by Tilchen, Clark and Walker). I think EVERY gay group in Boston deserves to use *GCN* as a means of communication and that every major action by any gay group, whether transsexual, lesbian feminist, S/M, transvestite or man/boy love, deserves coverage, especially if it takes place in Boston. Where possible, *GCN*'s own staff should write articles including some which take a critical or investigative stance, but individuals and groups in the community should also speak in *GCN*, not only in letters but in news reports, analysis and features.

Sincerely,
Tom Reeves
Boston, MA

Editor's note: Whatever inaccuracies or shortcomings were created by last-minute changes in Phil Knighton's article are due to the stress of meeting deadlines and are by no means a reflection of a "blackout" on NAMBLA or on any other organization.

Design Director Rob Schmieder responds: GCN is not a newspaper operating under a dictatorship, as implied near the middle of Tom's letter. I should know, having been one of the people voted down after our discussion of the photos. In a collective, sometimes we are able to reach consensus, decisions after discussion, sometimes opinions are so unreconcilable, or a decision is so imperative, that a vote must be taken. In the latter case, someone ends up happy, but there is no dictator involved.

Let's hope that by this time next year, we can settle back into a booth after a long day, have intense conversations, dance, play pool, laugh, spend too much money on pin-ball, sing, read graffiti, and just be . . . at our own bar.

Sincerely,
Joyce Kauffman
Somerville, MA

masada

To the Editor:

I would like to comment upon Dov ben Khayyim's attempt to portray the Zealots at Masada as gay revolutionaries. His purported correction of "inaccuracies" in the recent television series is itself inaccurate.

In his description of the Zealots as having given themselves up to "effeminate practices" and "unlawful pleasures," Josephus is not talking about the defenders of Masada, but rather about the Galilean contingent in Jerusalem. Moreover, immediately preceding this passage (in Book IV of *The Jewish War*), Josephus describes this contingent as wanton robbers, murderers, and rapists, who drank the blood of their victims. This is hardly an example of beautiful gay love.

At the same time, we must remember that Josephus was a traitor to the Jewish cause and an apologist for the Romans, and not a critical historian. His personal prejudices often led him into hyperbole. However, in approaching Josephus, we cannot ignore those passages we dislike while we cite uncritically those we appreciate. There is no need to distort our history to make a point. Gay Jews have more than enough to be proud of over the centuries without having to rewrite or whitewash history.

Shalom,
Barrett L. Brick
Washington, DC

Gay Community News

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LESBIANS AND GAY MALES

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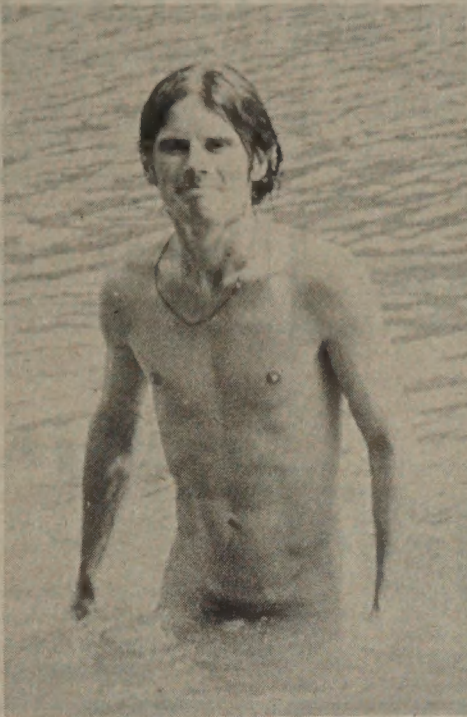
Speaking Out

On Nude Pictures

By Michael Thompson

Last week *GCN* ran an article I wrote on free beaches. The article was written to go with some photos I'd done a few years ago at these beaches. A tentative layout was being done by the design editor when some other staff members saw it, voiced opposition to the photos and called a staff meeting. Later I was informed that the photos were unacceptable and asked if I wanted to pull the article. It was a Wednesday night, before a Thursday layout deadline and it would have been difficult to fill the gap. The resort supplement had to go to press that week due to advertising commitments, so I said I'd go along with whatever the staff decided.

Thursday morning I went to the office to talk with people. Feelings were expressed from: "why so much attention given to this" to "women are oppressed by men, the penis is representative of that oppression and women don't want to open their paper and see penises." A majority felt that whereas the photos depicted youthful, "classical" bodies, if not otherwise offensive, they were contributing to, rather than challenging the idealization of such a type (oppressive to those who don't fit the ideal). It was felt that *GCN* shouldn't participate in that idealization.



I responded that there had been no need to judge the photos as a group — all or none. I had offered to pull any one or several of them, or even to substitute other photos which obscured the pubic areas (though I thought that this was avoiding the issue). Anything to alleviate another boring layout of print and ads. I've re-submitted the three photos I'd originally wanted to have published, for this Speaking Out. I think that they were very much in context. "Boy and Pigeon" was taken at Pirate's Cove. The boy was a runaway doing quaaludes supplied by a gay man — as referred to in



the article. "Long-legged reclining boy" (wide-angle distortion) was taken just north of Santa Cruz. It depicts one of the surfers I wrote about. The third photo is of me coming out of the water in Truro — the author of the article shown doing what I'm writing about.

I agree that it would be nice to have more of a variety of people to illustrate the first part of the article but I didn't have anything appropriate that I could get permission to run. When I first discussed the article with the design editor, I pointed out that it would be an all-male layout (women have enough problems on the beach with photographers without me adding to it) and asked if he could check with some of the women photographers to see if they had anything on file. Sue Fleischmann did send in a couple of shots but the subjects had their backs to the camera. Women's feelings about nude photography of the sort that appears in *Playboy* and *Hustler* is understandable, but I don't think my own work is like that or even like that in *Blueboy* or *In Touch*. I hope it's more like that of Van Gloeden, F. Holland Day or Ockenga (and this doesn't have to be that old distinction between "pornography" and "art"). Should the *Village Voice* be criticized by us for publishing Jacqueline Livingston's photos of her masturbating young son or should that be left to those same people who complain that allowing anything positive about gay people on television or radio is offensive to them?

These photos are what the article was about. It is a part of my experience. Except for the brief "politics of the beach" opening I made no particular attempt to be universal. Staff writers on salary may feel obligated to be more "objective." If there are those who are offended let them write in and say so or better still, let them write about and illustrate their own experiences. There has never been a periodical which didn't offend me in some way at some time (certainly this one has). It's good for me; makes me examine why.

If this seems arrogant I'd like to point out that I've worked with *GCN* for three years now. I could have put that effort elsewhere but felt that the diversity of the paper and its readership, and what I see as its healthy discussion of the issues (that some people wish would go away) make it deserving of continued support. I'd like to do that but at the moment I feel excluded.

Editor's Note: During staff members' discussion of whether or not to publish Michael Thompson's photos with his article about nude beaches (*GCN*, Vol. 8, No. 43) many issues were raised which we decided we'd like to discuss with our readers as well: the images we usually see in the media of peoples' bodies and the images we'd like to see; our feelings about our sexuality; sexism; racism; exploitation; objectification; the role of nudity in our newspaper. We look forward to your outraged, contemptuous, shocking, incisive, approving, stimulating responses.

Michael Thompson expressed a desire to compile a "photographic essay of nude beaches around the country" and was also interested in writing a text to go along with this essay for inclusion in our resort supplement. I was very interested with this idea and when I read the text, I felt that the subject was covered well — on a political, historical and personal level.

As an editor, I try to preserve artistic integrity both when editing a piece and helping determine which photos/graphics run with an article. Michael contends that his photos help to illustrate his article (some of the photos are of individuals who were mentioned in

the article). I disagree with this contention. Since the focus of the article deals with the politics of and Michael's personal experiences on *nude beaches*, I felt that by rejecting the photos, artistic integrity was not sacrificed and was enhanced. His photos were not of nude beaches, but rather they were of nude young men on beaches (young men who are all white, classically beautiful and obviously posed).

I am not opposed to having nude bodies in *GCN* — quite the contrary. In accepting Michael's essay, I was hoping for pictures that showed expanses of actual nude beaches with many types of bodies. Unfortunately, this was not the case.

Warren Blumenfeld, Features Editor, *GCN*

Why I was opposed to running the photos:

1. All of the photos were of young, white, slim, handsome, able-bodied males. I think *GCN* has a responsibility to avoid the sexist, ageist, racist, looksist, able-bodyist representations of the human body which characterize so much of the media in our culture. I could give a long theoretical analysis of why this group of photos does not belong in a feminist newspaper, but I trust that *GCN* readers either know this stuff already or perhaps will be motivated by this discussion to research it for themselves.

Lately I've heard a lot of people joke about "political correctness," as if anyone who has a consistent set of values is following some bureaucratic line. Nobody tells me what to believe or how to act. I take all the knowledge and experience of my life and decide what my values and actions are. I feel that if anybody, female or male, feels that they are compelled to act by "politically correct" standards which are meaningless to them, then they should find out more about the practice, theory, and history of feminism and lesbian/gay liberation. I don't expect or want everyone to reach total agreement on everything, but I think we can reach some minimal common ground of values and goals by which we can work towards social change.

Maida Tilchen

I am essentially in agreement with everything Michael has said above. To me the two key sentences in what he says are these: "It is a part of my experience" and "I feel excluded." My commitment to *GCN* has been reinforced principally by the belief that it is a forum which, not grudgingly but enthusiastically, tries to include all our experiences. In this case, I feel that one person's experience has been judged unacceptable for inclusion in that forum.

When Michael brought in his photographs to show me, I was at first surprised: they were not the pictures I *expected* to see. That is because I did not take them myself. Upon reflection, I realized that they were an honest representation of what his eyes saw while at those same beaches he describes in his article. In both the article and the pictures, it was clear to me that what Michael saw when he went to a nude beach was, primarily, younger men. The fact remains that the article and the pictures are the product of a single person's vision, and should therefore be dealt with at the same level of discourse.

The issue of looksism, etc. seems to me a red herring. Does any image of a young, white, able-bodied male inherently offend? People do not choose the looks they are born with, and that applies to *us all*. Finally, I don't personally find any of the boys pictured at all attractive, and am bothered by the notion that they represent some sort of "idealized beauty." In the eye of the beholder, maybe.

Rob Schmieder, Design Director, *GCN*

I had strong conflicting feelings about Michael Thompson's article and about the photographs he submitted to accompany it. I found the young men he had photographed attractive and, as usual, his photographs were quite good.

I was impressed with his article. I have been naked among other naked people, friends and strangers, in several different settings and have found a kind of personal liberation in it. But the liberating effect has depended on its being a social act. I have lost my self-consciousness and shame to the degree that the setting included a variety of human beings, all with the same kind of self-consciousness to lose and all losing it because in the diversity one's own naked body has turned out to be as unremarkable as any, as flawed as the rest in its own way and as beautiful. Given commonplace human diversity, one can't be too old, too young, too fat or thin, or the wrong color or gender.

The liberating effect has depended on being neither the viewer nor the viewed but both at the same time, in complex interactions with the rest of the crowd.

The same impulse toward nudity has found narrowly limited satisfaction in the countless photographs in countless publications of posed naked individuals. What could be liberating participation in a social act becomes oppressive, passive viewing of whatever naked body the photographer chooses.

There was a jarring contradiction between what Michael wrote about the liberation of nude beaches and the posed photographs of individual naked youths, all in their late teens, all slim and conventionally attractive, all male and all white.

It was because of that contradiction that I opposed using those photographs to illustrate that article.

David Morris, News Editor, *GCN*

"Speaking Out" is the column designed for the benefit of *GCN* readers. It is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your thoughts, ideas, feelings and comments to us and we encourage you to respond to any ideas expressed in this space. The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper, the staff or the advertisers. Write c/o Speaking Out, *GCN*, 22 Bromfield St., Boston, MA 02108

Community Voices

neo-nazis

Dear Friends,

... For the past three weeks I have been researching a sudden increase in the activities of a neo-Nazi group in Hayden Lake, Idaho, a small rural community only 40 miles east of Spokane. Last week I drove to Hayden Lake to interview these racist, anti-gay people directly, discovering that they are affiliated with the Klan, National States Rights Party, neo-Nazi groups in Europe and in California and New England; and they are organizing and arming themselves for "a time, coming soon" when they will "rid society of its parasitical elements." These elements include feminists, Jews, mongrels (mixed-raced people), homosexuals, etc.

I know from what they said and what they showed me (maps, books, military uniform, "educational material," printing shop) that they are deadly serious and highly organized. Because I look straight, aryan, and my name is of Germanic

origin, I was invited to pay a \$15 membership fee to join this group (I also took copies of *The New Order*, *The Torch*, and *The Thunderbolt*, fascist papers of the NSPA, KKK, and NSRPA, to convince them I think as they do.) I plan to return on May 17 for a major conference about a national meeting they attended with the Klan in Texas (support in the flap over Vietnamese fishermen in Galveston).

I've read several issues of *GCN* and I respect it for its purity as a newspaper, deleting articles of explicit sex. I admire the journalistic expertise and integrity, plus a lack of provinciality...

Without any organized gay community in Spokane, I feel isolated and impotent to thwart the effects of growing ultra-conservatism in my area of the country.

Sincerely,
William Grissom
Spokane, WA

***GCN* welcomes letters to "Community Voices." If at all possible, your letters should be typed and double-spaced. Anonymous letters will not be published, but names will be withheld upon request. Letters should be addressed to Community Voices, *GCN*, 22 Bromfield St., Boston, MA 02108.**

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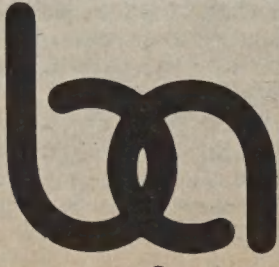
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COUPON GCN-1

Press

Continued from page 1

dependence of the press. That is our first obligation . . . The Gay press cannot be pushed around. We are no longer just an advocating press. While I strongly support the NGTF, they've made a mistake and must be made to realize it."

Valeska told GCN, saying she spoke also for Brydon, that "the furor [over the Release] was somewhat justified in that we should not have named Larry Bush directly. That was a mistake. By singling out Bush, we opened the door to the kind of criticism we received. The action was justified."

She went on to say, "That we ask editors to check facts we feel is justifiable, but our feelings now are to move past this monkey business, get on the backs of our enemies and get off of our own."

"We're thrilled with the formation of the GPA. We're moved to rethink and to improve our relationships with the gay press, making ourselves more accessible and aggressively seeking out reporters and editors."

When asked about the Charles Morris situation, Valeska told GCN that "she feels better about it. We had a good talk -constructive. I came away from the meeting with a much better point of view of problems of the journalist, and I believe that he also has a better understanding of our problems at NGTF."

Morris went on to say that "Lucia and I had scheduled our meeting to last for an hour. It turned out to be three and one half hours. It was very productive. I really do agree with Lucia that we both came away with better understandings of each other's role. I speak for Larry Bush as well when I say that it was not the intent of the *Sentinel* to have Valeska and Brydon fired, but rather to make it clear the extent to which we are committed to keep our press strong and free."

Finally, he said, "I am very glad that Valeska has made the statements she has. She's a most capable and talented person. The problems really should be behind us."

Bush could not be reached for comment.

On May 20, GCN received a call from Valeska. She indicated that she wished to make a further statement speaking for herself only. "At this point I would like to say that Larry Bush is a talented and basically credible reporter who has made an invaluable contribution to both the gay and straight press on a number of occasions. I am genuinely sorry that his relationship with the NGTF has deteriorated in recent months."

DeSabato, upon being read her comments, told GCN that he wished "the letter to him had been as specific in its language as were her comments to GCN."

-filed from Boston

CORRECTIONS

Due to unfortunate last-minute changes, the article in GCN, Vol. 8, No. 43 on the hearing to determine whether Richard Peluso would retain his "Sexually Dangerous Person" (SDP) classification gave the erroneous impression that Peluso prefers SDP and imprisonment at Bridgewater to the perils of life in Walpole prison.

Peluso had in fact stated in 1977 that he then preferred SDP to Walpole but he had not at the time been informed that SDP implied an indefinite sentence and, possibly, life in prison. He is currently fighting his SDP classification.

Sections of the article giving credit to attorneys Richard Iandoli and Kim Dwyer for the legal services they provided free of charge were omitted from the article.

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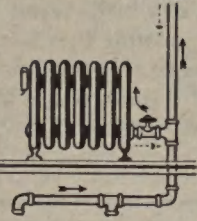
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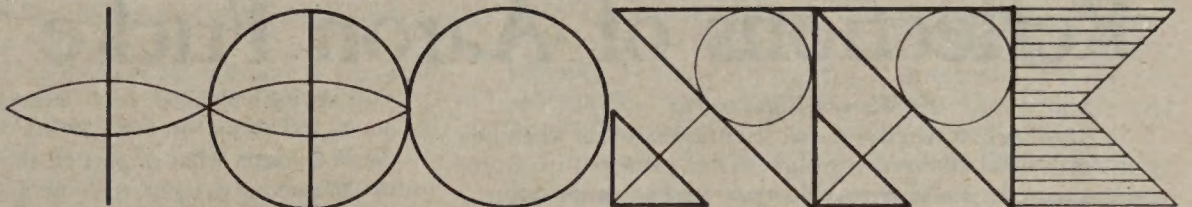
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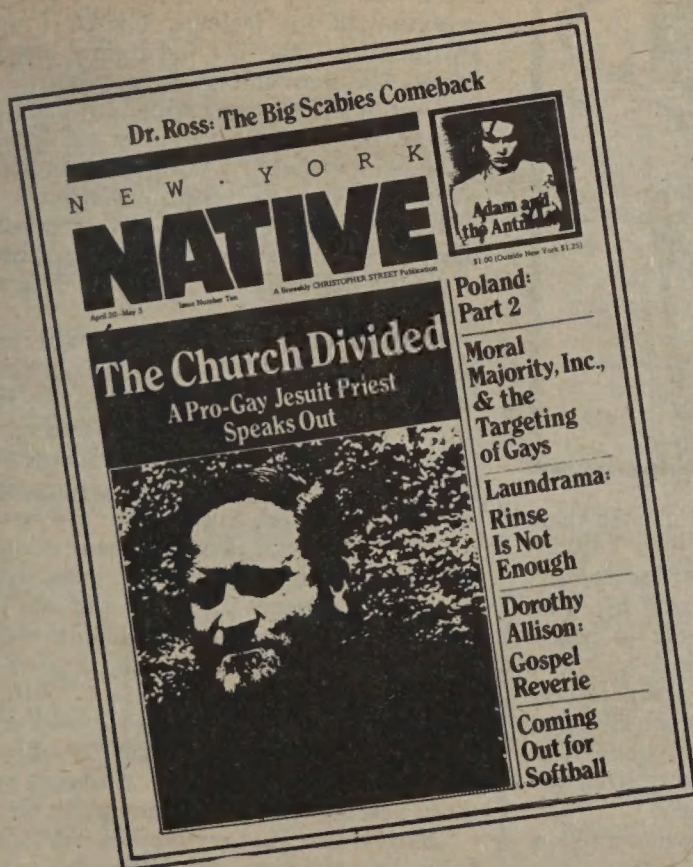
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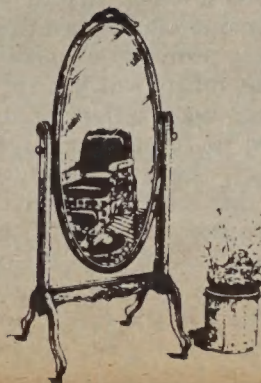
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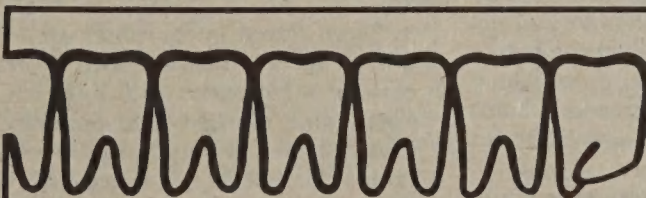
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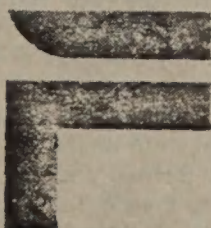
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A Story of Resiliency

REFLECTIONS OF A ROCK LOBSTER: A Story About Growing Up Gay

By Aaron Fricke
Alyson Publications, Inc.,
75 Kneeland St., Boston, MA
116pp, \$4.95

Reviewed by Warren Blumenfeld

The Story

A rock lobster is not a mythological beast as is a unicorn, nor is it the typical type of lobster with which most of us are familiar. It is, rather, a clawless crustacean which leads a solitary existence on the bottom of the sea, travelling from rock to rock. Being without claws, it seems not to be particularly adept at self-protection.

Thus stems the metaphor out of which Aaron Fricke relates his life as a young gay male growing up in an environment full of hostility and prejudice. He too learned, at a very early age, to keep to himself — to retreat into his shell unable to fight back at the overwhelming injustice around him.

In *Reflections of a Rock Lobster: A Story About Growing Up Gay*, Aaron chronicles the aspects of his life dealing with his sexuality: beginning with his earliest sexual memory (being aroused while considering the anatomical proportions of Batman on T.V.) and leading up to and continuing through his 18th year when he gains the courage to take another male to his high school senior prom.

Little has been written on the topic of childhood sexuality. Many would have us believe that it does not exist and in those cases where it does, it is a mere aberration or the result of "corruption" or "influence" from an older person. Aaron, who has been sexually active from a very early age, explodes these societal myths and in doing so makes a connection between the oppression of children with that of other oppressed groups. However, though Aaron was finally able to free himself from society's lies, he was initially trapped by its condemnations. In this context, two prominent themes run through Aaron's story which caused him to hide his true self: doors opened on him at inopportune moments and things were thrown at him — both literally and symbolically.

Typically the image of an opened door is a positive one which alludes to the beginning of new and broader opportunities. However, the opening of doors had the reverse effect in Aaron's early life. Being a sexually active young

child, he relates how as each door opened, the closet door was more tightly closed behind him: his friend Billy's mother yelled at him and Billy when she discovered them in a closet together; another time, his friend Bob's mother opened the door to Bob's room and gave Aaron a beating for touching Bob while he was in bed; Aaron's father, opening a door to find him writing the words "Proud To Be Gay" on his mirror, called the police thinking Aaron had taken drugs; Paul Guilbert's mother told Aaron to get out of her house when she opened the door to find Paul and Aaron reading gay literature; a fellow student yelled, "That's disgusting," after opening the door to a toilet stall in which Aaron and his friend Jon were being sick from over-drinking at a school drama club cast party.

For being different, many things were thrown at Aaron. In the 8th grade a group of boys shot Aaron in the leg with a BB gun, kicked and punched him in the stomach and mouth, knocking out a tooth, and threw verbal abuse at him while he lay on the ground; in physical education class during his senior year of high school, students called him a "cocksucker" and occasionally smacked wet towels at him in the locker room; someone spraypainted the word "Gay" on the outer storm door of his family's home; students spit at him while he was in detention for coming late to school; in biology class, when the teacher walked out of the room, some students threw dissected animal parts at him; a few days after his decision to take a male date to his senior prom, while walking in the corridor of his school, a student punched Aaron below his right eye opening up a

Reflections of Aaron Fricke

By Warren Blumenfeld

Aaron Fricke reached national attention last year when he successfully challenged his high school principal in court for the right to take a male date to his senior prom. Though Aaron is not the first to attempt to take someone of the same sex to a school prom, he seems to have filled a media void. When news of his challenge hit the press, reporters from all over the country converged on the small town of Cumberland, Rhode Island to interview Aaron, his classmates and school officials.

During prom time and the year following, Aaron has appeared on numerous radio and T.V. shows (including the Phil Donahue show) and has been interviewed in many national and local magazines and in newspapers — both gay and straight. He emphasized that his reason for these media appearances is not to become a "gay celebrity" but rather he wants to get the word out to other gay male and lesbian youth that "they are not alone and they should be proud to be who they are. If I can do this by example then I am using the media to my advantage."

Now living in California, Aaron was recently in Boston to complete his new book, *Reflections of a Rock Lobster: A Story About Growing Up Gay* for Alyson Publications, which traces his life beginning with his earliest recollections of growing up gay to his court challenge and eventual attendance at his senior prom with Paul Guilbert.

I interviewed Aaron recently at the GCN offices to discuss his decision to take a male date to his prom, his book and what the year since the prom has been like. (Note: In the text of this article, passages followed by page numbers are taken from Aaron's book; all other quoted passages are drawn from my interview with Aaron or from court transcripts.)

The idea for *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* came about when Sasha Alyson of Alyson Publications asked Aaron to write a short article about his experiences growing up for a chapter of a forthcoming anthology written by gay high school students. Liking the article, Sasha commissioned Aaron to expand it into a book.

Various titles, such as *Guess Who's Coming To The Prom* and *Tuxedos For Two*, were considered before a final decision was made. Though only 19 years old at the book's completion, Aaron is confident that his story is one which will be of interest to gay youth, older gay men and lesbians and others who are concerned about what it was like for one young man to grow up gay in America.

During our interview, Aaron briefly discussed the book: "It's about my life more so than the prom itself. It starts with my first gay feelings as a child which began very early, basically ever since I was born. I think that I was born homosexual. There's a lot of little episodes that I write about discussing these early feelings and then I go into the attitude I began to feel from society. I mention the time my sister and I were watching *Batman* on T.V. and I talked to her about the anatomical proportions of the guy who played Batman. She freaked out and that was my first hint that it was not the proper thing to talk about. As I got older, I mention how being homosexual became a point of fear and pain during certain stages of my life."

Aaron is from Cumberland, Rhode Island which is a small town located about 20 miles north of Providence. He lived there with his family until he graduated from high school. He describes his parents and sister:

My father worked as an independent ships' pilot out of the port of Providence. His seagoing career made it impossible for him to be present all the time during my childhood.

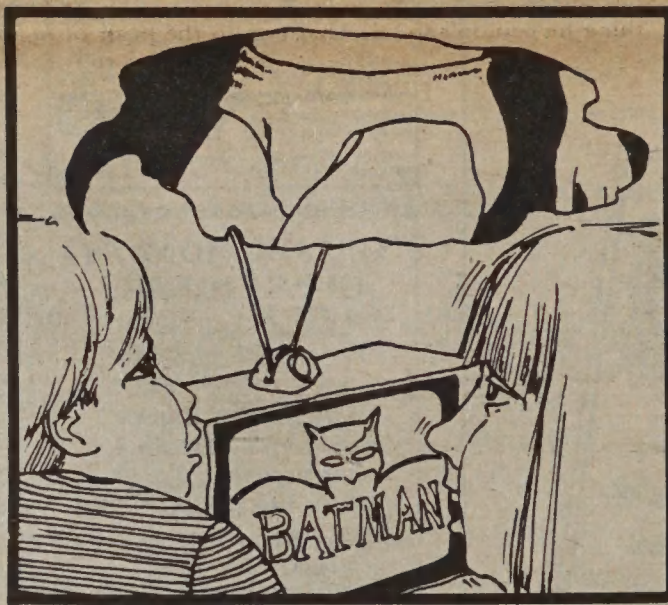
... But he didn't let his unconventional schedule infringe on our relationship. We spent much time together simply because he wanted to make that time for me.

My mother never worked outside the home after she married. She spent most of her time taking care of me and my sister Cheryl. Mom did a very good job, and I developed a deep love for my mother and for my father.

Cheryl was born eight years before me. Because of our great age difference, my sister and I were not particularly

close during childhood. In my eyes she was another adult, almost a third parent, and I looked up to her. (p. 12)

I asked Aaron what impact he thought living in a small town had on his decision to come out as a gay person. Says Aaron: "Mainly I think that most parents and teachers in most towns, unless they are very liberal, have the attitude that homosexuality is against the norm and that it's wrong. Many gay people from small towns don't tell anybody for fear that others will feel that it's not right. However, I think the main difference that living in Cumberland as opposed to living in a larger city had for me was not necessarily the attitudes of my parents and teachers, but simply that there just weren't many gay people out of the closet because they couldn't be. There were no gay organizations within 30 miles of Cumberland and there's no bus service there. It's like an island set off somewhere and there's no way you can get out to meet other gay people until you have a driver's license."



Illustrations by Alan Maskin

Aaron stayed in the closet until he was 16. Then there was an incident which helped to change his life: "I saw an episode of *Holocaust* on T.V. which mentioned something about pink triangles and homosexuals getting the pink triangles on their uniforms when they were in prison camps. I related to that because I knew about how Jews were treated in the camps. I knew that that was definitely wrong and the show brought forth to me that the killing of gay people and hating of gay people was also wrong. This was the first time I felt that somebody else realized gay people did exist and that they were oppressed."

Soon after viewing this T.V. show, Aaron met a fellow classmate who told him that he was gay: "And then I met Paul Guilbert. He was not from Cumberland originally. I'm not sure where he's from. He was able to be honest with his parents and he showed me how to be gay and to be proud. He was involved with some gay organizations in Providence: with Dignity, The National Gay Task Force and with a youth group. He basically was the one who showed me that being gay was nothing less than proper. And so at that point I had a radical change of opinion about myself. I began to feel that I was someone who should have rights rather than feeling that I was less than a human being, which is how I felt for a long time."

Before meeting Paul, Aaron felt that there was no single person with whom he could communicate his feelings. He turned to other things as an outlet for his frustrations. One of these outlets was food: "I really went through this traumatic time which a lot of gay people go through because they are unable to communicate, unable to express their feelings and just be themselves. I fortunately didn't lie to myself, but it did cause me some inner conflicts. What happened was I took it out with food. Some people would contemplate suicide, and get it over quickly.

I decided to do it slowly by overeating. I really got pretty fat. I did this because I felt that people hated me and I couldn't cope with that so I ate in an attempt to forget about my loneliness which in a way separated me more from people because fat people are definitely oppressed and segregated in our society. And it got worse — it was a vicious cycle. I ate because I was depressed and then I got depressed because I ate. Fortunately after I met Paul and he introduced me to some good friends, Asher and John, they helped me to lose some weight. I was up to 217½ pounds at my heaviest and now I'm down to 130."

I asked Aaron if he credited his coming out as a means of getting in touch with his food problem: "I think that coming out was a way of getting in touch with my own feelings. It enabled me to feel whole with myself and helped me to communicate with other people. Later on the food problem took care of itself. Once my communication problem was gone, the food problem disappeared."

Another outlet for his feelings that Aaron used before he came out was in the making of films: "When I was fat, I used the art of filmmaking to take out a lot of my frustrations. I made films with a Super 8mm camera. A lot of times I'd make movies about people being killed and hurt, and the people were usually me. I was always the one getting hurt, the one who got the knife. In one film I played a superhero named 'Superfellow' — a gay hero. It was a take-off on Superman which in a way was just the confusion in my feelings. I knew I wasn't a killer or anything like that so I was having myself being a great person who went around saving other people, but then at the end of the movie, I ended up being sliced up in the shower. So it was a matter of me feeling that I really shouldn't be hated. I wanted to do good things and I wanted to be a nice person but as much as I tried, I still ended up being hurt. I know this sounds so self-pitiful, but I guess that's the way it came out, now that I analyze it. At the time I didn't think that. That's the way I see it now."

With the courage that he gained after meeting other gay people, Aaron decided to come out to his parents, though he was fearful of their reactions. He had expected his mother to be nonsupportive of his sexual orientation after hearing her make derogatory comments about gays during family visits to Provincetown — a popular gay and lesbian resort on Cape Cod. Says Aaron: "My mother would sometimes socialize with gays, but then behind their backs she would say, 'Don't ever go with a homosexual. If anyone in Provincetown comes up to you and asks you if you would like to come up to their apartment, don't do it.' And I said, 'Why not?' And she said, 'Because they'll chop you up into little pieces.' And I said, 'Why would anybody want to do that to me?' And she said very nonchalantly, 'Because they are homosexuals.' So I got the idea that homosexuals were really bad. And then when I found out that I was homosexual, then it really hit me."

"But I realize that my mother really did love me, right from the beginning, but I was afraid that she wouldn't love me if she knew that I was homosexual. That's why I went through that big traumatic thing, feeling that I couldn't communicate, because I thought my parents couldn't accept me. But as it turned out, my mother was very accepting. She loves me unconditionally. After I told her, she said she had known for quite some time."

"My father, when I first told him he cried. I guess it was sort of a natural reaction, because for one thing I'm the last person in my family who will be able to carry on the name which is important to him. I guess to that extent I can see why he would be a little upset if I never have kids, which may not be true but in any case, I told my father that I was gay when we were sitting in a restaurant. After he cried he said that he wanted to help me out and assured me that even though he cried, he loved me and then he said, 'You know, I never thought I'd be sitting in a restaurant with a homosexual telling him I loved him.' That was just so great. I was very happy."

Things were quite different for Aaron and Paul at Cumberland High School. Two years ago, Paul Guilbert tried to take a man (Ed Miskevitch, a Brown University stu-

gash that required five stitches to close.

While the book deals mainly with Aaron's difficult times, there are also some lighter moments. One in particular concerns an incident which happened when he and his friend Jon were driving late at night in sub-zero temperature back to Rhode Island after going to see *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* in Boston. Both Aaron and Jon were dressed as characters in the movie in full costume and make-up when their car stalled. They were forced to hitch-hike to a phone:

After 20 minutes of walking, we saw headlights in the distance. We stuck out our thumbs, hoping the darkness would cover up our strange costumes. The car came to a halt. A moment later we climbed into a station wagon loaded with an average family of five. They had been on vacation in New Hampshire, the man explained, and had been interrupted by an unexpected emergency. There we were, with Mr. and Mrs. Erma Bombeck in the front seat and their three children in the back with us, driving through Rhode Island at 3:00 in the morning. (pp. 49-50)

When Paul Guilbert — a fellow student at Cumberland High School — told Aaron that he was gay, Aaron's life started to turn around. Paul helped him to come out from under his shell; he helped him to begin to open some of his own doors; he helped him to love:

After several months of friendship with Paul, I realized that my feelings for him were unlike anything I had felt before. . . . All through my adolescence the shell which had protected me so well had also blocked all rays of warmth and love. But now that was changed. (p. 45)

dent) to his junior prom but the school principal, Richard Lynch, would not allow it. Paul was unable to take the matter to court because the American Civil Liberties Union could not back him since he was only 17 years old and did not have his parents' consent or support. Faced with a deteriorating relationship with his parents and scorn from many of his classmates and school officials, after his junior year Paul moved to New York City. Aaron relates how Lynch and some of the teachers at the school stirred up negative student sentiments on the topic of homosexuality:

On the first day of my senior year, Mr. Lynch gave his usual address to the senior class. As the seniors, he told us, we must set a good example because our younger classmates looked up to us.

In his next breath, Mr. Lynch told us we were all going to have a good year, because we no longer had to put up with "the problem" of the year before. He was referring to Paul, of course, who had stayed in New York and would not be a Cumberland student this year

After this demagogic speech, the students went wild.

That day, Aaron decided to come out openly to the students in his school which set the stage for his eventual decision to fight for the right to take a man (Paul Guilbert) to his senior prom:

I vowed that my final year in Cumberland High would be different from all my previous years in school. Before, I had only seen prejudice directed at *me*. Now I saw it directed at someone else, and I saw it as nothing more than fear and ignorance. This new perspective made all the difference for me: I was apprehensive about facing the other students as an openly gay person but I would do it anyway. (p. 56)

Not only did Lynch stir up student sentiment against Aaron, but in addition some of the Cumberland High School teachers joined in the attack: "There were teachers who were very crude with jokes and were definitely against me taking Paul to the prom. They expressed their negative opinions rather than giving both sides or just letting the kids make up their own minds. One teacher actually called me a 'faggot' in class, and I forget exactly how he went about it, but I think it was addressed to some other student, like 'tell the faggot to do this.' With Paul, I saw what had happened the year before. Everybody was very imma-



ture, and I think it stemmed from the teachers and the principal who were just very ignorant. So I saw the teachers influencing the kids in a very negative way. I think definitely the teachers play a major role in the bad influences. Of course, the parents do too, but parents are influenced by the teachers at some point. This is why I've chosen to focus on the teachers' prejudice, because that's what I came most in contact with.

"Some people come in contact with prejudice from the church, but I've never been too much of a church going person. I've always been in school and I've always seen attitudes like this, and how the kids have been influenced."

Aaron came out as a gay person and through a series of incidents (witnessing Paul's unsuccessful attempt to take a male date to the prom the year before and the prejudicial statements made by Richard Lynch, the high school principal, about this attempt), Aaron found the courage to fight and later to win a court battle for the right to take a male date to his prom.

As Aaron's life transforms, so does the metaphor: to one of liberation and renaissance. "Rock Lobster" is also the title of a popular New Wave song by the group B-52s. This song has special significance for Aaron because when it was played at the prom, it helped to reduce much of the tension about his male date.

Style

Though the book is written in an orderly fashion, at times I found the writing to be stylistically unsatisfying. It lacks a certain clarity of detail and richness of exposition to help illuminate the larger points or incidents which are recounted. More information could have been given concerning what kind of people his parents and sister Cheryl are and how their relationships developed over the years. At one point, he states that "I was getting closer to my parents." However, no further information than this is given.

When Aaron did begin to acquire friendships, mere outlines are sketched of such people as Asher, Jon, Anne, Jeanne and Geri, and subsequently the reader never gets a chance to know them.

At times, Aaron begins to touch upon some of his

Lynch cited the following reasons for not allowing Aaron to take a male date to the prom:

1. The real and present threat of physical harm to you, your male escort and to others.
2. The adverse effect among your classmates, other students, the school and the Town of Cumberland, which is certain to follow approval of such a request for overt homosexual interaction (male or female) at a class function.
3. Since the dance is being held out of state and this is a function of the students of Cumberland High School, the School Department is powerless to insure protection in Sutton, Massachusetts. That protection would be required of property as well as persons and would expose all concerned to liability for harm which might occur.
4. It is long standing school policy that no un-escorted student, male or female, is permitted to attend. To enforce this rule, a student must identify his or her escort before the committee will sell the ticket. (pp. 76-77)

With help from Chuck Noice and John Gaffney of The National Gay Rights Task Force in Providence, Rhode Island, and lawyers John Ward and Lynette Labinger, Aaron sued Lynch in the Federal District Court. Says Aaron: "Mr. Lynch said on the stand at the court trial that he would not discourage two females to dance, but two males was something he couldn't stand. That gets to the heart of homophobia — the myth that males can't experience real feelings or have real contact or *espress* love. Mr. Lynch tried to stifle that."

The judge, Raymond Pettine, ruled in favor of Aaron's First Amendments rights to take Paul to the prom. Wrote Pettine: "Appropriate security measures coupled with a firm, clearly communicated attitude by the administration that any disturbance will not be tolerated appear to be a realistic, and less restricting alternative, to prohibiting Aaron from attending the prom with the date of his choice . . . Aaron's conduct is quiet and peaceful; it demands no response from others and in a crowd of some 500 people can easily ignored . . . the First Amendment does not tolerate mob rule by unruly school children."

Aaron told me that student reaction to this decision was mixed. Some students were genuinely happy by his victory. Others were quite upset, feeling that the prom would now be ruined. One student in particular acted out his anger. Aaron recalls this experience: "There was one isolated incident. There was this kid, this idiot, who approached me in school one day before the prom. He was a junior; I had never seen him before. The day after it all hit the news, I got shoved by him once in the hallway at my locker. Being shoved at my locker was just such an everyday, secondhand experience. It had happened before. So this kid approached me and shoved me that one day. It was nothing major, just a shove, and the next day I was walking through the halls and the kid butted in front of me and just punched me in the eye. I was totally bewildered. I wasn't expecting it. It was the type of thing that was not provoked. I was just peacefully walking. It's not like I even had eye contact with him, which some people think is enough to provoke an attack. I saw who it was, but I didn't look at him. I figured he was up to something, he butted in front of me quickly and then he punched me and I fell to the floor immediately with my books in my hand. It was strange because none the the kids helped me get up.

"Underneath my eye, it was bleeding. Some kids were saying, 'Go to the nurse,' but others were just still jeering and taunting me and calling me a 'faggot' and a 'queer' and it just showed their lack of humanity. They just don't have many feelings.

"My walk up to the nurse's office was to me symbolic of my entire years in the public school system. I was tortured inside, and still people tormented me. They kept going on and on. They still don't understand what gay people go through every day. Sometimes prejudice is just so strong that it can't be touched."

Aaron seems realistic when he says that his book cannot touch those who most need to counter their own hatred and fear of gay males and lesbians, but he hopes that it will make an impact. Says Aaron: "I hope my book will help other kids. I hope it's going to help everybody who has ever felt the way I did, which I know there are many

interests (his comedy magazine *Wacky*, making home movies, acting) but he never truly conveys the extent of his involvement or the enjoyment they provided in his life.

Aside from these stylistic considerations, the book did spark something in me. While reading *Reflections of a Rock Lobster*, I often found my mind drifting away from the page not because it was uninteresting — quite the contrary — but rather because Aaron's words sparked memories of my own experiences growing up gay in a straight environment. I remember when I was harassed before and after school by some of the boys in elementary school; called the "chorus girl" because I was one of only three boys in the elementary school chorus; punched and called "queer" and "pansy" because I didn't do well in nor was I interested in sports; isolated myself in my room in junior and senior high school for lack of many friendships because I was considered different; and I was frightened by my mother saying about *The Children's Hour* that it "had to end that way" when Shirley MacLaine hangs herself because she thinks that she may be a lesbian.

Reflections of a Rock Lobster is a story filled with much pain and torment, but it seems clear that it is also one of hope; Aaron never falls into self-pity but rather he conveys a resilience of spirit and determination of will which I found encouraging. I am sure that for myself and other gay men and lesbians who have felt alienated from peers during school years, this is our *American Graffiti* — our high school fantasies lived out. Lesbians and gay males will feel validated by Aaron's story.

people out there who have, because I've received at least 1000 letters from people just saying, 'Thank you for what you did. Thank you for going to the prom.' I knew that other people wanted to do it. I didn't realize people would be so appreciative of it. So I think then, I'm really glad I was able to shed some light on their lives. But with writing



this book, I think there are a lot more people who it can reach, and who can see that there is nothing to be ashamed of in being gay. We are human beings and have feelings and even if others can't go to the prom as I did, at least they can know that there are thousands of others like them."

I asked Aaron what advice he would give to other high school students who might be contemplating taking a date of the same sex to their prom: "I would say that, first of all, if you have it in you, then go through with it. To go to the prom for me was a matter of feeling like it was a stand for myself, and I felt better about it. My conscience was clear. To go to the prom with a girl would have been a matter of lying to myself. I would say to those gay high school students who would take a date of the opposite sex just to hide yourself, it's not worth it. Don't do that to yourself. I think that definitely is where proms can really get to be sickening. I would say don't go to the prom just to put up a facade. And if you want to go to the prom with someone of the same sex, then do it, because you'll feel better about yourself."

Aaron told me that the prom itself was the most beautiful event in his life: "It was very moving because everybody there was so nice to us. There were no negative attitudes that I noticed. Paul apparently noticed or detected something. I think he went up to someone and they said, 'Get lost, fag.' or something like that, but with me I noticed nothing.

"We slow-danced. The kids all stood back and watched in awe, I think, because most people don't see two men within touching distance no less dancing, with my head on Paul's shoulder. This was something very revealing for them. Right after we slow-danced, they played the song "Rock Lobster" which is by the B-52s, and at this point a crazy thing happened. Everybody started dancing, slowly at the beginning of the song, at least half the people there — 250 people — were dancing. Guys were dancing with guys and girls with girls, and there was definitely a release of frustrations. Everybody was just being themselves. For that six minutes and forty-one seconds people were able to put their fears and inhibitions out of their minds, and do what is natural for them. I danced with a girl during "Rock Lobster" and other guys were dancing with me, and Paul was dancing with other people too, and everybody was just together."

Graduation, which took place on the high school football field, was also something of an event. Aaron wore a pink triangle on his graduation gown. As his name was called to receive his diploma, he heard boos and cackles

Continued on Page 11

Men Gather Against Rape

By Michael Moncher

Saturday morning dawned rainy and bleak, but weather notwithstanding, we convened at 10:00 at the Group School on Franklin Street, Cambridge in preparation for the Mens' Walk against Rape and Violence.

In a large, bare room 40 men sat, semi-circled, some on long ago unsprung couches leaking their stuffing, some on the cold concrete floor. Most were young — 20 to 35. Many were bearded and bejeaned. None wore three-piece suits. All were, I would soon discover, committed to the elimination of sexism, which, I would learn through the day's activities, is the single factor most responsible for the perpetuation of women as objects. I learned, further, that this objectification, re-enforced by constant and pervasive media emphasis on women as things of sex, directly contributes to the acutely escalating levels of rape and violence in our society. Defusing the mythology about rape and sexual abuse was to be the focus of the walk. Bringing some recognition of how sexism objectifies and thus encourages these crimes, would be a by-product of the day's activities.

The march was organized by Mike Marcovitz and Rick Cotroneo of Oasis — a group of gay and straight men "Organized Against Sexism and Institutionalized Stereotypes." The group is concerned with *peaceful* means of challenging the popular notion that women are second-class baggage, important only insofar as they fulfill the needs of "their men."

Mike was talking, as I walked in, about how the day would be organized. At the end of the large group meeting then in progress, we broke down into "affinity groups" of six or seven men, each led by a facilitator. I placed myself in Mike's group both to fulfill my reportorial duty as well as to get to know better a man who had the

courage to commit his life to his politics.

Just before we split off for small group support meetings, Mike gestured to a large, hand lettered poster tacked to the wall behind him. It was headlined, "What Can We Do to Combat Rape and Violence," and on it were a number of suggestions running the gamut from "Look at All People Gently," to "Never Yell Rape, Always Yell Fire." Mike's primary emphasis, however, was on sharing. We were, he said, a unique group of men with the courage to share not only with each other, but also with other men outside what it means to us to be men; what it feels like to be enraged, scared and powerless as we watch the escalating level of violence by men towards women — violence calculated, perhaps not consciously, to keep women in their long accustomed places.

As our small group went to one corner for more intimate conversation, I was indeed beginning to feel unique — and a little bit scared of what I might encounter once out on the streets of Cambridgeport. Mike seemed aware that this fear was shared by all the group members, himself included, and he encouraged discussion about it.

What then happened was as close to group therapy as one can get without paying for it. Each of us shared with the others the fact of our fear — fear of the reaction we might encounter once on the streets seeking discussion with other men concerning their feelings about rape and manhood, violence and destructive stereotypes. Some of us felt vague physical danger, while others simply found it hard to deal with the hostile reactions we might encounter. "I don't like it when people don't like me," one of us said. Several of us found it difficult to take politically unpopular stands. It was certainly a new experience for me.

After 30 minutes together, the

concerns began to melt and their arose a sense of solidarity and a little security. At least we would not be out there alone, but rather with men in whom we had placed our confidence by sharing our thoughts and feelings. I thought that it's not so much for gay men to encounter one another on this level of physical and emotional sensitivity but it's remarkable to see straight men interact in the same way. It runs totally contrary to established cultural mores, and it's beautiful.

As noon approached, the affinity groups once again re-united for a final sharing. Mike and Rick reiterated how we could respond if asked by men on the outside what they might do to help. (A phone call to Oasis at 617-776-3452 will provide numerous suggestions.)

Just before leaving the school, leaflets in hand, hearts in mouths, all 40 of us joined in a large semi-circle and clasped shoulders, huddle-style. I was struck by a strong wave of caring; of concern for each other's safety as well as for the issues of the march. Later, Rick told me that "feminism teaches us that the personal is the political. We have to learn how to take care of each other."

Then we were on the street, our group having chosen Central Square in Cambridge on which to concentrate our effort to engage men in one-on-one conversation. Such questions as "Why do you think women get raped," were suggested to provoke dialogue. Many of the answers indicated precisely how pervasive is the mythology; how difficult it will be to combat it.

We paired off, anticipating that if things got physical, the "buddy" could at least run for help. After half an hour little Michael, my partner, observed that we had talked only with students from MIT and several elders. Our fear of exposing ourselves politically was

interfering with dissemination of the word to precisely those whom we felt needed it most. We took a few deep, deep breaths and began to speak with more stereotypical sexist, assuring ourselves that, at least, we were in better shape than most and could likely outrun an escalating political disagreement.

I thought it interesting that black men were perhaps more sensitive and responsive to us than any other group. Several conversations pointed out a strong parallel between sexism and racism: both objectify human beings, both result not only in violence, but also in perpetuation of second-class status and corresponding lack of self-esteem.

What was disappointing was the reaction of those who refused to stop at all or who responded by assuring us that, as they had never raped a soul, our message clearly had nothing to do with them.

We regrouped at 1:30 for a rally where Eileen O'Neill of the Rape Crisis Center of Cambridge brought home more strongly from a woman's perspective the insidious nature of the crime of rape. Speakers throughout the day had made many points, which were endorsed by O'Neill, that rape is a crime of violence, not of passion. It is the single fastest growing crime in America today. It has little, if anything, to do with sex. It has nothing to do with how much or how little a woman provokes by attire or bearing and everything to do with the insecurity of men relative to their masculinity — their need to perpetuate their strength by perpetuating women's weakness; their need to keep women second class by keeping them at all times in debilitating fear for their personal safety and, ultimately, their lives.

O'Neill spoke of "the effects of long term terror on one's psyche. It's debilitating. It prevents us from living our lives. One of every three women is a survivor of sexual

assault. We're talking about long range trauma. Every man, in his lifetime, will know a woman who has been sexually assaulted."

On the positive side, she said, "It's encouraging to see men bonding with men. It's a relief for me to see that there are, in real life, whole groups of good guys. Men can become aware of what a woman feels like when she's attacked and raped. She needs emotional, medical and legal support. She needs someone to listen."

"Perhaps," she continued, "the bottom line is education — not just of adults, but of male children. They must learn what a real relationship is all about. We must educate our girls how they can defeat objectification."

As the day drew to a close, Armando (Mondo) Gaitan, a local gay male activist, read several graphic first person accounts of rape. They pointed out the enormity of the problem. It will not be solved in a decade or in a generation.

At least, however, we were out there trying and, in enough years with enough people chucking pebbles into the Grand Canyon, perhaps the great hole will fill and the sexual stereotype which is so damaging will be erased.

At the end of the rally, the group once again formed a tight circle. Mike and Rick were given some flowers from the group in appreciation of their courage and persistence in organizing the march for Oasis. Someone led the group in a paraphrase of a Holly Near song which, in many ways summarized all that had happened to me during a day which had changed me in a fundamental way.

We are a gentle, loving people,
singing, singing for our lives.
We are a gay and lesbian people,
singing, singing for our lives.
We are strong and active people,
singing, singing for our lives.

Feminist Theater To Perform

By Lee Swislow

The Feminist Amerikan Theatre is a dedicated group of four women committed to the production and documentation of Feminist Theater. Their most visible work is the Womyn's Theatre Festival, happening this year in Boston from May 29-June 7. This is the second of their (hopefully) annual festivals, and will present a combination of local women, and women from the South, the East Coast, Canada, and possibly London.

Susie, Madeline, Stacy, and Blitzen, the women of the theater collective, came together last year to produce the first festival, and have continued to work together. I talked with Susie and Madeline about their work and their process.

Susie described her motivation: "Kady Van Deurs proposed the idea to me. I had been doing women's theater for four or five years and wanted to meet other women on the East Coast also doing it. Doing women's theater in the South was real isolating. We could do our own stuff, but I wasn't in touch with other women to figure out what it was. By coming together with other women, we could empower ourselves and define something really new."

Of course, it's not easy to define what that something — what feminist theater — is, exactly. Madeline started with: "It's theater that deals with women's living and experiences. The basic premise is autonomy for all women. It deals with acting out oppression and giving dramatic clarity to things that oppress us as women. It's a consciousness-raising tool, to teach and show as well as enter-

tain. Men have used women on stage quite perniciously. We have been getting male fantasies of what women are, getting male directors who choose female stereotypes."

Susie continued: "I love theater. I want to build matriarchy, and theater is a strong medium. We're completely intertwining art and politics. Any women doing a play about women is doing something new."

However, they also believe feminist theater includes more than women doing work about women. Madeline explained: "We also want a place for women to do plays about nuclear power and things like that. We need to share our vision, to make our contribution to saving this world. Our lives won't be our lives if the world is dead. There is enormous power in a group of women, or a group of lesbians, doing a play about nuclear power — it is informed by our vision of the world."

The Feminist Amerikan Theatre works as a collective, a process that is not always easy. Indeed, as Susie described it: "We work with great struggle and commitment." The four women of the collective come from a range of political beliefs and include both lesbian and heterosexual women.

"We're really dealing with some of the issues [of being in a collective]. We're learning how to respect each other's opinion, and how to disagree without it being the end of the world and the end of the work. We're learning when to go off and work on your own and when you work together. We're finally delegating tasks and acknowledging our different strengths and weaknesses," said Madeline.

For Susie, "The collective pro-



Linda Hammond in *Parima (and Gerushe)*.

cess has been really good. I feel supported. I'm learning how to slow down and make it right — to not panic. There are other women who care a lot who are also doing the work."

The collective is working with a number of other women to actually produce the festival. Most of these women are lesbians. Susie feels that, "a lesbian has much more power to create. Creating is

about loving yourself, and loving women is about loving yourself." But she emphasized: "We want to provide a space for women of all political and sexual choices to do their theater."

The 10 days of the festival will include plays, collages, choreopoems, character pieces, and dance. There will also be workshops during the days on weekends. The aim is to give expression to the new forms women in theater are developing, as well as to the new content. In addition, on Monday, June 1, they will be having a party where women can come and "mill around" with the performers and producers to discuss ideas and feelings about the work. Thursday, June 4, they are having a cabaret, with a number of short, nightclub-type acts. The Collective (the women who ran the Saints bar) will be selling drinks at the cabaret to continue to raise money for their new space.

Besides producing the festival, Madeline and Susie have just put out the first issue of *Journeywoman*, a new magazine devoted to issues involved in doing feminist theater. They see documenting women's theater as being as important as producing it. They have photographs and videotapes of much of last year's performances. As Susie said, "Women have always done rituals, have always done theater. We just haven't had access to it."

The Womyn's Theatre Festival will take place at Studio Red Top, 367 Boylston St., Boston. Tickets will be available at New Words Bookstore, 186 Hampshire St., Cambridge. For information and the schedule of events and workshops, call 965-1190.

© Tia Cross, The 1980 Womyn's Theatre Festival

Voices in the Night

Chapter 15

By Andrea F. Loewenstein
(Final Episode)

Sunday morning Ann Morganthal woke up early and alone, knowing that something bad had happened, but, just for those first waking moments, forgetting what it was. Then she remembered the form letter which had arrived two days ago, informing her that the building she lived in was being sold, and that her lease would not be renewed. It gave her three months to find somewhere else to live.

Ann got up and went to the stove for coffee, wondering what they'd do to her little kitchen when they turned the building into a condo. She watered her trailing ivy, thinking of the room all modernized, with row lighting, and the kind of stove that was part of the counter. She was pretty sure that she wouldn't be able to afford any other place on Brimpton Street or nearby, but it was almost impossible to imagine living anywhere else. True, Brimpton Street was the place she's been mugged and hassled, a reminder of break-ins and being scared to walk down the street at night. But it had been home to Ann for almost seven years now. She knew the people on the block: Josie and Lina, Sam and his friends, Manny, David, Hui, and the other members of the self-protection committee. It was

where she'd lived with Tina, her lover before Bell, and where she and Bell had spent so much time, laughing, and fighting, and making love. . . .

Bell had been sympathetic when Ann had told her. But not surprised. "Yeah, it's been happening right along and now they hit you with it," she said, and behind her word Ann heard the weight of all the words she wasn't saying. Bell was involved in a black lesbian organization these days, and she was training after work to become part of a team of midwives doing home births in Roxbury and Dorchester.

"It's not that I don't want to see you, Baby, it's just that I'm so god-damn busy," was what she said about it. They weren't together that much, but when they were it was still very good a lot of the time, very sweet. And Ann was afraid to press Bell on it. She was afraid that Bell might shrug her shoulders, say "Head, Baby, it does look like we're going different ways, doesn't it," and just walk off. And Ann wasn't ready for that to happen. Not yet. Not if she had anything to do with it. It was not in the apartment already, more like Summer than late Spring, and Ann slipped on a sleeveless dress and sandals and went outside.

This early and this season Brimpton Street still looked beautiful, with the puny little trees

blooming in white and purple and no one but a few dog-walkers out. Halfway down the block she could see an old drunk, sleeping it off against the side of a building, but he looked harmless and peaceful. Ann was filled with a remote sadness, as if she had already left this part of her life, this address, behind her. It was as if she was outside of it all, looking in.

Quickly she walked home, ran up the stairs, and went straight to the typewriter. A fresh sheet was already in it, and there was a big stack of filled pages on the desk. It was — No! She wasn't ready yet to say what it was, because if she did it might disappear. But she'd been writing regularly, these mornings she woke alone, and when she reached 100 pages she was going to say what it was, and give it a name.

Ann looked out the window. Sam was walking by, his red hair disheveled, his black leather vest open. Moments later, Lina came, dragging her feet along in high heels as if she hadn't slept yet that night.

"Outside the window, one by one, Sara watched her friends walk by," wrote Ann. "She began to realize that it was time to leave Brimpton Street behind. New voices were calling." She stopped to wipe away a tear, then typed on.

Apuzzo

Continued from Page 3
contribute to changing the world we live in," she said.

Apuzzo urged the movement to become more responsible to people it urges to come out in "enemy territory." "So when I say accountability, ask yourselves, are we doing for ourselves as others have done for their own when they've been in trouble?"

"What accountability really means is saying where we're going to go, how we're going to get there, what it's going to take and cost," she said. "We have to ask serious questions in figuring out this movement's principles. Is it about 'make it okay to be gay?' If that's what it's about, I've been wasting my time. the movement must address oppression."

"We have to realize that as long as we look with myopic vision as to what constitutes gay/lesbian rights, I'm afraid for us. I'm afraid we're going to look like selfish kids having a temper tantrum."

CORRECTION

The photograph of Trish Karlinsky on page 11 of the May 16 issue of GCN was mistakenly credited to Susan Fleischmann. The photograph was taken by Joyce Harper.

Due to a pasteup error, "Let's Go to the Beach" in last issue's Resort Supplement contained a section that was out of sequence. On the page 10-11 spread, the ninth column of type should come between the fifth and sixth.

The POLITICS of HOMOSEXUALITY

TOBY MAROTTA

How lesbians and gay men have made themselves a political and social force in modern America

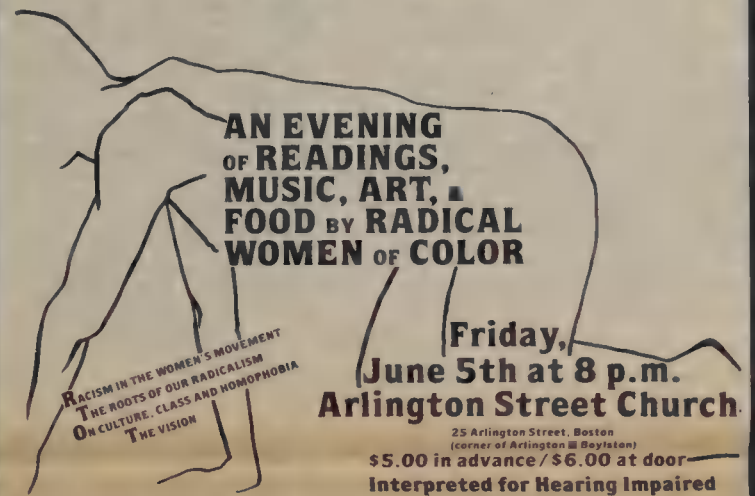
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Continued from Page 9

coming from the visitors' bleachers, but soon after this he heard cheers and applause coming from the members of his graduating class — cheers of love and respect.

However, an hour before graduation, Aaron went to the school office to pick up his year book when he ran into Lynch. Aaron recalls: "One of the things that inspired me to write *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* was when I was graduating. Mr. Lynch came to me and he said that if this question ever comes up again, his answer to homosexuals would be the same."

Many changes have taken place since Aaron had graduated from high school. He has written a book for which he has traveled around the country to promote. He hopes to continue writing and talking to groups and individuals about the topic of gay rights.

After graduation he moved to California, outside of Los Angeles. In the fall he plans to study dietetics at Fullerton College. He said that his interest in nutrition stems from his past problems with food and in the future he hopes "to help other people who also have problems around food and weight." He also plans to take part in college plays and hopes one day to become an actor. I asked him whether all the publicity that he has received during the last year will help or hinder my chances for an acting career: "People say it's going to hinder my chances, but I think that in a career of being an actor, I'm not going to go out for gay roles or anything like that. But I might possibly end up being stereotyped that way. There is nothing that I did this year that I'm ashamed of."

"I've been in school plays, and I won an acting award: 'Outstanding Performance' for playing Walter Mitty in 'A Thurber Carnival' in high school. I'm also in the International Thespian society. I'm one of the rare thespians who can be himself."

Responding to criticism that it may be presumptuous for him to have written a book about his life while still at a very young age, Aaron responds: "Honestly, nothing is special about me. I'm just like every other gay person who has felt the oppression that society can give us and who paid for it to a certain extent by getting fat and by trying to suppress feelings. At one point, I put up a facade which is why I can relate to people who do the same thing. I can relate to people who can't come out of the closet. I'm not saying everybody should come out in the streets and scream 'I'm gay,' because it sometimes doesn't work. There is a wrong time to do it. For me, to take someone of my own sex to a prom, I picked the right time. There's nothing I regret about it, but I just feel that I did something that I think a lot of other gay people would like to do. I'm just glad that I was able to do that."

Smith's Variety

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Film

Junk

The Fan

Directed by Edward Bianchi.
With Lauren Bacall, James Garner, Maureen Stapleton, Michael Biehn, Hector Elizondo.

Script by Priscilla Chapman and John Hartwell.
Based on the novel *The Fan* by Bob Randall, *At the Paris Cinema*, Boston.

By Michael Bronski

The material in *The Fan* is so familiar that you feel as though you've seen it all before — and you have. Beginning with *the Cat and the Canary* (filmed first in 1927 and remade twice since) and continuing over 50 years later with the *Halloween/Friday the 13th* syndrome, the old plot of psychotic killer terrorizing helpless (and usually female) victims is still with us. This time the twist is not a night in a haunted house or being trapped in an off-season summer camp, but a glamorous Broadway star, Sally Ross (Lauren Bacall) who is first loved, then hated, by a fan, Douglas Breen (Michael Biehn).

Douglas, however, is not your usual run-of-the-mill psychotic fan: the film implies he is a repressed homosexual whose adoration of Sally is a reflection of his confused love/hate feelings for women. He manages to slash or cut six characters (four women and two gay men — one real, one probable) before the final confrontation between himself and Sally.

Bob Randall's *The Fan* was published in 1978. It was a trash, pop, bestseller that was non-written in the form of letters and memos from one character to another. It's the sort of book you read while waiting for the 9:00 movie to come on: the disagreeableness didn't stay with you because the book evaporated while you were reading it. Junk as it was, it had two advantages over the film. All of the violence was presented

second hand (you couldn't expect Sally to write: "He is now coming at me with a knife"), and the character of Douglas had a little more depth because you could read his thoughts. The film's violence is not all that graphic (much less than *Halloween*, but would still have to be cut for TV) but it is gratuitous, gruesome without being scary. The book presents Douglas explicitly as a repressed homosexual. His fear and lust when going to a gay bar to find someone to kill gives us more understanding than in the film where his actions may be open to interpretation.

This is the first feature by director Bianchi and although it has a slick surface it looks all jumbled, like it's been cut up for TV. This isn't surprising since his major credit has been the *Dr. Pepper* commercials. It is as though the director, writers and editors didn't know how to handle even the most basic straight-forward — and essentially workable — material. There are fades to black whenever a difficult scene change presents itself; plot inconsistencies that distract you no-end (how does he get into Sally's apartment to attack the maid and ransack when it is under police security); and even such basic flubs as having two male characters who look so alike it is difficult to tell one from another. It is possible that *The Fan* was heavily re-edited before release (there are several stills in the press packet that are not in the film). But Bianchi, who claims Hitchcock and Chabrol as his screen mentors, doesn't even seem to have mastered the fundamentals of narrative technique.

The gradual merging of the TV and movie industries has been an artistic and economic fact for several years. The production values we recognize as hallmarks



Michael Biehn in *The Fan*

of the old studios are almost nonexistent. A talented director can still make a good product, but the number of hacks are on the rise. Movies are turned out with TV in mind — some of them even look like they are edited for the easy insertion of commercials. With the intervention of cable TV, other films — like the Angela Lansbury, Eliot Gould remake of Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes*, which may not be a box office powder-keg, completely bypass theaters and land up on the tube.

The shoddiness of *The Fan* seems to be a direct result of this. You can snip out the few "R" scenes (here, violence rather than sex) and have your TV sale packaged in no time. Aside from professional sloppiness this system corrupts the whole process of movie making; it's easy to pander when the product is cheap and easy to cash in on.

I suspect that the decision to imply, rather than explicate,

Douglas Breen's sexuality was twofold. In a film where the basic plot essentials are barely put across, any complexities of character or emotional relationships are near impossible. Even Sally's loneliness and confusion over her divorce is handled in the briefest, understated terms. The second reason is that the writers know full well that their implications about the characters are (movie obsessed queen hates women and turns killer) and after the gay outrage against *Cruising* decided to keep that gay angle on a very low profile. It is not a matter of raised consciousness but ineptness and fear that kept them from exploiting — in a more explicit manner — the character's sexuality.

It is interesting, however, that although director and writers are careful to avoid such gay implications in the plot, they know how to market their film. Although it is not a big budget film — it is produced by Robert Stigwood but

distributed by Paramount — it is getting a full fledged ad campaign, a good deal of which is being placed in the gay press. The *Advocate*, *Mandate*, and the other glossies (not to mention *After Dark*) have all carried either ads and/or puff pieces.

Ironically, the gay appeal of the film has little to do with the relationships between the characters but rather has to do with Lauren Bacall's starring in it. Bacall has always been a gay male favorite — even more so since her forays in to Broadway musicals; *Applause* was probably the first musical to have a prominent gay character and it is no accident that she was type-cast in the film. Presumably the producers don't take the material so seriously that they would worry that Bacall would begin to get letters from a crazed queen.

For the most part — and despite the production — most of the ac-

Continued on Page 13



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Film

Filming The Inside Of A Closet

Films by Feyson

At The Cauldron Experimental Theatre, Boston
May 15 and 16

By Frank Abrizio

Posterity may not have taken note, but nearly 60 feature films have opened in Boston since Christmas. I noticed because I sat through two-thirds of them, happily for the most part, yet curious to know if movies would ever bump into reality.

Most documentaries, and some of the more experimental television dramas, suggest the sloppiness of life, the random piling-up of events, the uncertainty of our feelings, but recent movies have streamlined, simplified the action. Everything is larger, spaceships as well as emotions, and each climax is a cataclysm. The primary advance of *Ordinary People* over *Father Knows Best* is attributable to changed times: now Father doesn't.

Such thoughts were stirred by a recent showing of four films by Feyson — a New York film-maker currently on a mini-college-tour — who appeared in Boston May 15 and 16 at the Cauldron Experimental Theater. One applauds in his work a unique gay voice coming to maturity, recognizes a growing technical proficiency, but the personal obsessions his films detail take no notice of anything beyond themselves. The bridge which should connect his keenly circumscribed, idiosyncratic world to our own seems to have never existed for him.

Lawless (1977), is a ten-minute clip from an as-yet-uncompleted feature. Its visuals are an unedited chunk of footage, and its out-of-sync dialogue is a montage of improvisations. The film's point isn't clear (at least not to me), but apparently has something to do with the confused reaction of a straight couple to the spectacle of a transvestite traipsing before

them.

The second film was described as a masturbation fantasy but is instead a film of a man jerking off; the distinction is critical, of course. Feyson's camera races up and down, back and forth across the man's body, splicing in shock footage of an eye operation, but the editing rhythms never sync up with the rhythms of the masturbation, nor suggest what the fantasy might be. Both films, however, yield flashes of insight and virtuosity, and patience is rewarded in the final two: *Lambda Man* and *Vocation*.

With *Lambda Man* (1980), Feyson's camera work is expressive, even subtle and he finally discovers how sound complements the image — particularly in the use of the cadenced clacking of a typewriter. What distinguishes the film is that the characters have at last unlocked the closet door, and are peeking tentatively outside. It features Feyson's only display of anger: one of our most social emotions. At one point a man is standing nude before an open window, staring down at some black athletes in the street, repeating the line "Who are the faggots?" with various intonations, almost as if it were a chant. (The line, it should be noted, is drawn from an actual letter which Feyson addressed to New York's gay film community. Feyson tosses the word "faggot" about in exactly the same way the blacks defuse the ugliness of "nigger" — by taking the word over themselves.) The moment is hardly a social or political breakthrough, but its anger, and the isolation and loneliness the film explores, hit home all the same.

Vocation (1981), his last film, was made on a new gay collective in rural Tennessee, where Feyson lived for most of last year. It's an idyll of faggotry, with numerous visual and aural references to Pan,

owing a certain debt to James Broughton's *The Pleasure Garden*.

Feyson writes in his program notes: "The process of logic, linear thinking, and the rational, literal, frightened minds which produce it, is simply a mechanism designed to produce the Being from the direct experience of reality." One can guess what he's trying to say — that inherited notions don't allow for a faceted view of the world — but what he says is that a clear thinker can't perceive reality. Muddled reasoning is one thing, but *praise* of muddled reasoning is something else all together.

The program was prefaced by a rare screening of Genet's *Un Chant D'Amour*, and all of one's feelings toward Feyson are concretized by comparison to Genet. Made in 1950, but suppressed for 13 years, Genet's film is an amazingly rich poem of love oppressed; two lovers are locked into adja-

cent celis. One immediately realizes that the sensual couplings in all Feyson's films is between man and his own cock; one longs for his camera to explore the man's face as lovingly as it probes the flaccid, hard, wet, dry cock.

Secondly, though Genet's film is a narrative (the avowed enemy of experimental film-makers such as Feyson) and a fable besides, there's more truth in Genet's understanding of homosexuals — homosexuality and the world in which it finds itself.

And enough can't be said on how circumscribed our world is. In *La Cage Aux Folles*, it was painfully obvious that whenever the couple stepped outside into the natural light, they were cruelly out of place, almost grotesque. Feyson's characters exist in an identical netherworld. It doesn't matter whether they are tripping through meadows in rural Tennessee or jerking off in secluded bedrooms, such isolation seals them

off from the rest of the world as surely as if the closet door were still nailed shut. What limits Feyson's films, in spite of their swift maturation of technique, is not his obsessive focus on the cock (although he does seem to perceive homosexuality primarily in sexual terms, and that isn't a very satisfying conception), but that he can't pull back and place his obsessions in the context of the larger world. He's an artist operating on instinct; what he lacks, at least at this point, is the ability to understand and organize them, and so draw his audience in.

The Cauldron opened a few months ago on the fifth floor of a Roxbury warehouse loft, providing a space for gay and lesbian cultural activities. These, so far, have taken the shape of poetry and play readings. Feyson's program was the center's first foray into film programming.

Music



Woody Simmons played at Passim on May 20, doing a lively concert. Her banjo ragas, one of which was based on the theme from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, were particularly well-received. Great guitar work and fun sing-alongs made this a very enjoyable evening. (MT)

Junk

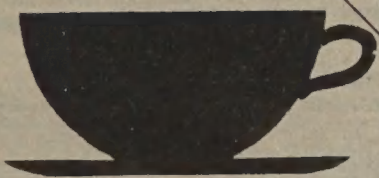
Continued from Page 12

tors do quite well. Maureen Stapleton and James Garner are at their usual professional standards, and Michael Biehn — as the killer — seems suitably psychotic.

Lauren Bacall looks great, but the part is so badly written that with the exception of the last scene, she seems to change clothes more often than expressions.

The Fan is junk. But after *Windows*, *Cruising*, *Dressed to Kill*, (and lots of others that have fallen by the wayside) it is becoming annoying, and distressing junk.

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GayCommunityNews

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WARNING

The following described male picked me up at a local gay bar; I took him home and he subsequently stole my wallet, watch and even the loose change in my pocket. I'm not complaining; I must have asked for it (although it's never happened before). But in order to keep this character from ripping off other people, here's his description:

Age about 25 to 27, 6'1", stocky but not fat, dark blonde straight hair, neatly dressed. Rather nondescript, actually, but the one distinctive thing is a slight accent, British or Scandinavian accent. (?)

TO THE GUY DESCRIBED ABOVE:
The credit cards have been cancelled. Please return my driver's license. That's the one thing I cannot replace. You have my address. DS (?)

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Hil I would very much like for someone to write to and it would really mean a lot to me. I am gay and have been since I was 17. I'd like to write someone who's sincere. I am a Pisces. I hope your favorite fantasy soon becomes a reality. Carol STEVENS, Box 11492 #102598, Oklahoma City OK 73136. (44)

I am serving a 12 year sentence in this ol' prison with very little correspondence. I would very much like to find someone interested in writing. In sisterhood, Pam McFADDEN, A830568, Box 147, FCI #254, Lowell FL 32663. (44)

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I am seeking correspondence because letter writing is the only device combining solitude and good company. Thank you. Lorenzo STONE, Box 41 #10006, Michigan City, IN 46360.

I am in firm agreement that people inside and out need to be educated into a higher consciousness concerning the gay community and also about the politics of 'crime'. I will end here not wanting to run off at the mouth which is characteristic of me. Rev. Tim Dudley, Box B-33524, San Quentin, Tamal CA 94974. (44)

I sincerely hope you will publish a small ad for me so I can have a penpal or two. Thank you for doing this for me. Your paper is a very great help for me and many others in my type of situation! Charles BURGER, Box 511 #160-856, Columbus OH 43216. (44)

Due to my present confinement here I am out of touch with the current events in the world and in gay society and it is like being totally in the dark and very lonely. Please write. Vincent JONES, Box 900 #26497, Jefferson City MO 65102. (44)

I read about your offer to prisoners in the National Lawyers Guild Notes and would very much appreciate someone to write. A.J. LITTLE RAVEN, Box 128 #93949, Stringtown OK 74569. (44)

Many gays get messed over in here for being themselves and holding their head high letting the world know they're gay. Communication from the outside would be very helpful. J. Bengie LIPROT, Box 779 #144170, Marquette MI 49855. (44)

I'm desperate for some kind of human contact. Could I pay for this ad on the installment plan? In either case I'm appreciative. Spirlin MOORE Jr., Box 45699 #152-256, Lucasville OH 45699. (44)

I'm a philatelist and working on my bachelor's degree in Sociology and I love all kinds of sports. Have a nice day. Thank you! William VARGAS, Box 45699 #137722, Lucasville OH 45699. (44)

I have been gay all my life and at the moment have no one who cares for me at all. Would you assist me in reaching some other gay people on the outside. James LA GRADE, PMB #85170 Mag 3, Angola LA 70712. (44)

I am interested in corresponding with people for mental and spiritual communication. My hobbies are photography, baking and all sports. Donald EVANS, CCI #160-528, 15802 State Rt. 104, Chillicothe OH 45601. (44)

I'm not ashamed of being gay but prison is no place to try to be yourself! I've seen too many gays mistreated in here. I need someone on the outside I can talk to, someone who cares about more than just 'getting off'. Otis BURR Box 41 #14307, Michigan City IN 46360. (44)



Gay male would like to hear from sisters and brothers for support and friendship. Let's get to know each other. Peace and love. Thomas M. HIGH, P1004 S-1, Drawer K, Dallas PA 18612. (44)

I was just shown a copy of your paper. It's great! I would love to have one of your readers for a penpal. Please write C.K. (Shawn) FAVER, Box 41 #3291-4, Michigan City IN 46360. (44)

Looking for someone to write from the NYC and NJ area. Will be released this fall. Thanks for having the guts to print a paper like GCN and for caring. Darrell DAVIS, Box 367 #79A3579, Dannemora NY 12919. (44)

Please help me find someone to correspond with on a friendship basis to ease this pain inside. My interests are reading novels, natural art, Egypt, dancing and contemporary society (social stratification). Thank you. Gilbert S. MICHAUD Jr., Box 1449 C-217-T #076687, Homestead FL 33030. (44)

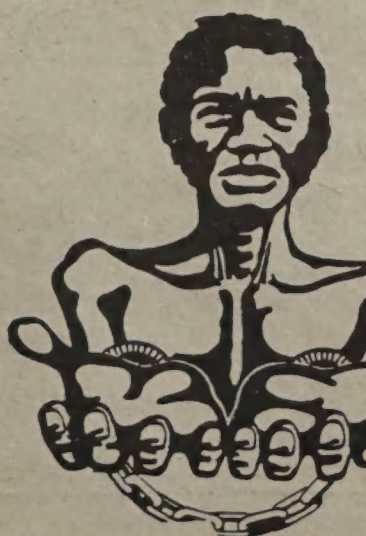
I wish to find some good people through the mail to write to on a regular basis. Will answer all. Thanks. Thomas WHITT, Box 511 #159-207, Columbus OH 43216. (44)

Every evening when my fellow prisoners receive their mail I'm left out. It's a very lonely feeling. Some of my interests that someone might want to write me about are chess, reading and writing poetry and listening to good music. John PAYNE, Box 41 #11777, Michigan City IN 46360.

Please add my name to your penpal list. Yours truly, Maurice LEWIS, Box 87 #N10502, Menard IL 62259. (44)

I'd like to correspond with someone in the "free world". I don't care purple with pink pokka dots, just so long as you don't think that prisoners are merely animals in cages, but rather are human beings. Please write Gary Lee GANDEE, Box 520 #243882, Walla Walla WA 99362. (44)

Hello! I'm 25 and have been gay for 15 years and would like to correspond with a mature and understanding man through your adorable paper. Thanks. James FENSTERMAKER, Box 511 #158-361, Columbus OH 43216. (44)



Calendar

weekly events

Boston, MA — Chiltern Mt. Club. Regularly scheduled sports events (with info #s): volleyball 266-2147; running 825-0181; swimming 227-5363; tennis 744-5498; scuba 899-7630; fencing 731-6344; biking 275-1336; basketball 236-1914; rollerskating 625-3314.

Boston, MA — Gay Recreational Activities Committee (GRAC). Regularly scheduled events: basketball, swimming, volleyball and running. Info: 327-2620.

sunday

Boston, MA — Boston Area Coalition for Cuban Aid and Resettlement (BACCAR) open meeting for potential sponsors of gay and lesbian Cuban refugees and also for other interested persons. Arlington St. Church. Every Sunday at 3pm. Info: 723-2997 (8-12pm).

Boston, MA — "Boston's Other Voice," weekly discussions of problems facing the gay community. News, interviews, calendar, music. 10:30pm. (WROR, 98.5FM)

Boston, MA — Oasis, a Coffeehouse with entertainment. Tonight: Open hoot. Bring your talents and your instruments and sign up at the door. 355 Boylston St. (chapel entrance). Doors open at 7:30pm. No admittance after 8. \$2.

Cambridge, MA — Lesbian and Gay Folk-dancing. Third Sunday of the month (see also Saturdays). Phillips Brooks House, Harvard Yard. 12:30-2:30pm. Beginners welcome. Info: Beth 666-4278 or Michael 492-1339.

Boston, MA — Gay AA meets at Old West Church, 131 Cambridge St. Gay men and women. 2:30pm

Cambridge, MA — Merrymount Musical Society, a musical group for gay men and lesbians, offering informal concerts on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Interested musicians (& listeners!) call Mark 236-4888 or Rachel 742-7997.

Boston, MA — Musically Speaking, women's programming. Music, ideas, announcements. Call Melanie at 494-8810 with events and comments. (WMBR-FM 88.1) Sundays 1-3pm.

Boston, MA — Gay and Lesbian Physicians of New England. Meets every 2nd Sunday at 2pm. Info: (617) 482-6874 or 247-5485.

Cambridge, MA — Gays at MIT (GAMIT) meets at 5pm. Walker Memorial Bldg. 142 Mem. Dr. 3rd fl. Everyone welcome. Info: 253-5440.

Cambridge, MA — Closet Space, a weekly news, interviews and music program for lesbians and gay men. On WCAS, 740AM. 11am.

coming events

Note to our readers outside the Boston area: so much is happening in the Boston area that we can no longer in the limited space we have list events for all our readers. We encourage you to support (or start!) local calendars of events with your time and energy (and \$!)

may 26 tues

Salem, MA — "Gay, gray, and ????" Bob Wheatley and Buffy Dunker of the Unitarian Universalist Assoc. discuss aging and the gay community. Sponsored by the North Shore Lesbian and Gay Alliance. Salem 5c Savings Bank, 210 Essex St. 7:30pm.

27 wed

Boston, MA — Oasis, a coffeehouse with entertainment. Tonight: Connie Breece, dulcimer music. 355 Boylston St. (at Arlington) \$3. Doors open at 7:30pm. No one admitted after 8. Wed. eve is women's evening.

Boston, MA — Rudy Kikel and Lloyd Schwartz will read their poetry at the Mills Gallery, Boston Center for the Arts. 549 Tremont St. 8pm. Free.

Worcester, MA — Ongoing mutual support group for gay/bisexual married men meets bi-weekly. Info: 234-6009 or 278-6239.

Acton, MA — Central Middlesex Social Club meets at 7:30pm. All invited. Info: 263-9607.

Orleans, MA — Shoreline, a gay social group, alternative to the bars, on Cape Cod. Meets every 2nd Sunday. Info: P.O. Box 1614, Orleans, MA 02653.

Greenfield, MA — Gay Men of Franklin County. Every third Sun. Green River Cafe, Osgood St. 7pm.

Concord, NH — NH Coalition of Lesbians and Gay Men. First Sun. of the month. 1-5pm. Statewide political action group. Info: 228-8049.

Boston, MA — Oasis, a coffeehouse with entertainment. Tonight: bring your talents and instruments and sign up at the door. 355 Boylston St. (chapel entrance). 7:30pm. \$2: All are welcome.

monday

Boston, MA — Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee meets every Mon eve at 7:30pm at the BAGLY (Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth office, 128A Tremont St. (across from Park St. stop), 4th floor. Come help plan for our June celebration! Info: 262-4777 (Voice and TTY).

Cambridge, MA — Parents and Friends of Gays meet on the first Monday of the month. 7:15pm sharp at the Episcopal Theological Seminary Library, 99 Brattle St. Info: 542-5188 or write: PFOG, 40 Cogswell Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140.

Boston, MA — The Front Runners running group. Jogging, running and racing for men and women. Weekly runs on Esplanade: M,W,F at 6 PM Info: 825-0181.

Somerville, MA — Women's Center Coffeehouse. 7:30-10:30pm. Entertainment for women every Mon. eve. at the Women's Center, 38 Union Sq. (above laundromat). Food and non-alcoholic refreshments. \$1 donation. Info: 623-9340.

Amherst, MA — Gay/Lesbian/Bi Rap Group. UMass Campus Center. 6:30-9pm. Info: 545-0154.

Portsmouth, NH — Seacoast Gay Men. 7pm. Info: P.O.Box 1394, Portsmouth 03801.

Brattleboro, VT — Southern Vermont Gay Men meet every 4th Monday at the Common Ground, 25 Elliot St. 7:30pm.

Nashua, NH — Meeting of Nashua Area Gays. 8pm. Info: Paul 888-1305, or write: Nashua Area Gays, P.O. Box 3472, Nashua 03061.

Boston, MA — Gay People of B.U. Meeting. Hartman Lounge, basement School of Theology, 745 Comm. Ave. 8-10pm.

tuesday

Boston, MA — Boston Area Gay and Lesbian Schoolworkers (BAGALS) meets on the first Tuesday of each month, for support and political action. 355 Boylston St. (church annex). 7:30pm. Refreshments.

Cambridge, MA — Friends Meeting at Cambridge. Draft counseling. Every Tuesday at 3:30 and 7:30pm. 5 Longfellow Park (near Harvard Sq.) Info: 876-6883.

28 thurs

BOSTON, MA — GCN NEEDS HELP PROOF-ING AND LAYING OUT THE PAPER. SEE THURSDAYS ABOVE FOR DETAILS.

Brockton, MA — Southeast Mass. Gay Group meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month. Info: Phil 583-8447.

29 fri

BOSTON, MA — GCN NEEDS HELP (REAL- LY!) SENDING OUT THE PAPER. SEE FRIDAYS ABOVE FOR DETAILS. IT'S FUN! ALSO, TODAY WE NEED HELP DURING THE DAYTIME (FROM NOON TIL 10PM) AND STAY AS LONG AS YOU LIKE. THE WORK IS EASY AND THE SURROUNDINGS ALWAYS AMUSING. (?)

Boston, MA — Cherrie Maraga, co-editor of *This Bridge Called My Back* (Persephone) will read at the Glad Day Book Shop, 22 Bromfield St. (near Park St.) 6pm. Donation. (Apologies for last week's mistaken listing.)

Boston, MA — Potluck dinner and meeting for lesbian lawyers. 7:30pm. Info: Katherine 723-6327.

Boston, MA — Chiltern Mt. Club. Potluck supper and summer trip planning. Info: John (617) 275-1336 or 864-0823.

Boston, MA — Chevalier/Strange Duo (counter-tenor/tenor voice and vihuela/guitar) will perform at Old South Church, Gordon Chapel, 645 Boylston St. 8pm. \$4.

Cambridge, MA — Daughters of Bilitis. Discussion and social group. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. (Harv. Sq.) 8pm. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Info: 661-3633.

New Bedford, MA — Rap group at the Aid Center. 18 S. Water St. 8-10pm. Info: 999-3141.

Uxbridge, MA — Support and Discussion Group for Lesbians. Eves, 7:30pm. Info: 278-5475.

Hartford, CT — Greater Hartford Lesbian and Gay Task Force meets at Hill Ctr., 350 Farmington Ave. 7pm (First Tues.) Info: 249-7691.

wednesday

Boston, MA — Gay Youth Rap. Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY). For all between the ages of 14 and 22. 7-9pm. 128A Tremont St. (near Park St. stop), 4th floor. Info: BAGLY 338-9472 or the Hotline: 426-9371.

Boston, MA — Walk-in VD screening and treatment for and by gay men. 6:30-8pm. Fenway Community Health Center, 16 Haviland St. (near Auditorium stop). 267-7573.

Boston, MA — Massachusetts Gay Political Caucus meets at 7:30pm every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. Info: 471-8404.

Boston, MA — Lesbian and Gay Media Advocates (LAGMA) meeting. 7:30-9:30pm. New members welcome. Help make the media more responsive to our needs. Info: 542-5679.

Cambridge, MA — Daughters of Bilitis. 35+ women's discussion and social group. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. 8pm. Second Wed. and last Fri. of each month.

Lynn, MA — North Shore Gay AA weekly meeting. Lynn Community Health Center, 86 Lafayette Park. 7pm. Info: 599-5928.

Providence, RI — Transvestite/transsexual meetings. 8pm. Info: 272-9247.

thursday

BOSTON, MA — GAY COMMUNITY NEWS NEEDS HELP PROOFREADING AND LAYING OUT THE PAPER. NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY. PROOFREADING BEGINS 5:15H AND LAYOUT ABOUT 7:30. REFRESHMENTS AND GOOD TIMES! 22 BROMFIELD ST. (NEAR PARK ST.) INFO: 426-4469.

Boston, MA — North American Man Boy Love Association (NAMBLA). Regular meetings on 1st and 3rd Thurs. 8pm. Glad Day Bookshop, 22 Bromfield St. (near Park St.) Info: 542-0144.

Boston, MA — Oasis Club. Food, disco, rap sessions and games. 9pm-4am every Thursday. 79 Broadway St. (Bay Village) in the Downtown Club. Gay club for everyone 18 and over. \$3 membership. Info: 338-8831.

Worcester, MA — "Straight Talk About Gays", a free form radio show with news, announcements, music, poetry, in-depth interviews and raps. 8:15pm. WCUW. 91.3FM.

Boston, MA — Oasis, a coffeehouse with entertainment. Tonight: Eric Law, original non-sexist men's music. 355 Boylston St. (at Arlington St.) Everybody welcome. Doors open at 7:30pm. No one admitted after 8. \$3.

30 sat

Boston, MA — Planning meeting for the New England Lesbian and Gay Conference (to be held in Boston June 19-21). All are welcome. 355 Boylston St. 1pm. Info: 628-1668.

Boston, MA — Oasis, a coffeehouse with entertainment. Tonight: Hillary Kay, soft folk rock, original and right on! 355 Boylston St. (at Arlington) Doors open at 7:30pm. No one admitted after 8.

31 sun

Boston, MA — "Up on the roof: a discussion among lesbians and gay men on housing and displacement". Whose neighborhood is it? Gentrification. Coming out in your neighborhood? Sexuality and family and housing. Come to 22 Randolph St. (Dover T stop, off Harrison). 5pm. Food. Donation \$2. Info: 776-3340.

Boston, MA — Mudfire dancing. A day-long improvisational dance workshop for women, with Pat DeAngelis and Marsha Hillier. 11am-5pm. Sliding scale \$15-25. Info and registration: 864-7223 or 868-4476.

Cambridge, MA — Jewish women and class: a discussion of our experiences as Jewish women in same and cross class groups. 7

Cambridge, MA — Lesbian Liberation. A leaderless support group meeting every Thursday from 8-10pm. Newcomers welcome. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 354-8807.

Boston, MA — Boston Area Lesbian and Gay History Project. 7:30pm. Info: 426-7351.

Cambridge, MA — Lesbians with children. Support group. 8-10pm. Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 354-8807.

Somerville, MA — Lesbian Support Group for younger women. Somerville Women's Center, 38 Union Square, (2nd floor over laundromat). 6pm. Info: 623-9340.

New York, NY — Biweekly gay male "S/M" support group. 8pm. Info: Brian 243-3332 (6-10pm).

New York, NY — General meeting of the Committee of Lesbian and Gay Male Socialists at NY Marxist School, 151 W 19th St. 7th floor. 7:30pm. Info: 988-3012.

Boston, MA — N.U. Lambda, Northeastern University's social and support group for lesbians, gay men and their friends meets every Thursday at 245 Eli Center. 7pm.

Northampton, MA — Pioneer Valley Gay People's Alliance is now forming. Meetings on first and third Thursdays at the Unitarian Society, 220 Main St. 7:30pm. Info: (413) 586-5979.

friday

BOSTON, MA — WE NEED HELP SENDING OUT GCN EVERY FRIDAY EVENING. COME BY FOR A FEW HOURS ANYTIME AFTER 6 AND SHARE ENERGY, REFRESHMENTS AND GOOD TIMES!!! WOMEN AND MEN WELCOME. 22 BROMFIELD ST. (NEAR PARK ST.)

Boston, MA — Gay male cultural production group forming in Boston for local and national entertainers. Any interest or experience, call Dimid at (617) 445-3604. Leave message.

Pittsfield, MA — Lesbians United meetings. Info: Women's Services Center, 499-2425.

saturday

Boston, MA — Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY) drop-in center and occasional trips/activities for lesbians and gay youth 14-22. 1pm on. 128A Tremont St. (across from Park St. sta.), 4th floor. Info: BAGLY 338-9472 (esp Wed & Thurs eves) or 426-9371 (eves).

Cambridge, MA — Lesbian and Gay Folk-dancing. First Saturday of the month. 3-5pm followed by a potluck dinner. Phillips Brooks House, Harvard Yard. Beginners welcome. (See also Sundays). Info: Beth 666-4278 or Michael 492-1339.

Temple St. 1-5:30pm. Donation: \$1.50 (more if/less if).

Boston, MA — Randolph Country Club presents Karl Houston and "All that glitters is not girls" in a gala performance at 7pm. Benefit for Lesbian and Gay Pride Week. Randolph Country Club features swimming, recreation, dancing and relaxation. Support Pride! Donation \$3.

Boston, MA — Conference on lesbian and gay alcoholism for members of helping professions. Sponsored by Homophile Alcohol Treatment Service. Three-day conference to be held at the Craigville Conference Center, Cape Cod May 31, June 1 and 2. \$115 includes everything but transportation. Info and registration: Ron (617) 542-5188 or Steve (Worcester) 757-8623.

jun 1 mon

Boston, MA — Second planning meeting for the Take Back The Night march (later this summer). Major structural and theme decisions will be made. Harriet Tubman House, Corner Mass Ave and Columbus. 7pm. All women are welcome.

2 tues

Cambridge, MA — Boston NOW Lesbian Task Force meeting at the NOW office, 99 Bishop Allen Dr. (Central Sq.) New members welcome. 7pm. Info: 661-6015.

The deadline for Calendar Items is Tuesday at noon for the following issue.